THE

METHODIST UNION:

BEING A

Vindication of the Establishment of a Union

BETWEEN THE

METHODIST DENOMINATIONS IN CANADA;

SHEWING THE ORIGIN OF METHODISM AND ITS SCHISMS IN ENGLAND; ITS RISE, PROGRESS, AND SCHISMS IN THE UNITED STATES; THE FORMATION OF THE CHURCH IN CANADA, AND ITS SCHISMS; THE EVILS OF CHURCH DIVISIONS; IN WHAT TRUE CHRISTIAN UNION CONSISTS; WHEN TENETS SHOULD BE CHANGED; HINDRANCES TO UNION; HOW IT CAN BE EFFECTED; MOTIVES TO UNION.

BY THE

REV. DANIEL POMEROY.

"Together let us sweetly live—
Together let us die;
And each a starry crown receive,
And reign above the sky!"

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PREFACE.

DEAR READER,

Believing that the great object of life should be to glorify God in doing good; and feeling the conviction that the subject of Methodist Union in Canada is equal in importance to any other to which the Canadian public has been called, by either theological, moral, or political writers, is my apology for presenting you with this treatise. No other consideration could have brought it before the public.

I have for some time been convinced of the sinfulness of our divisions, and the necessity of healing them. But I have contented myself by impressing the truths of the subject on a few persons in public assemblies and in friendly circles, in my ordinary pulpit and private ministrations. But evidently this does not meet the demand. If an union is brought about, not only the hundreds, but the thousands and the tens of thousands, must be reached, not only in public but in their retirement.

With the hope of widening the circles of agitation on this subject, I decided to publish this work. I have no private or party interests to subserve: but have boldly done what I, in the providence of God, felt called upon to do for the honour of Christ and the advancement of His cause on earth, to which I have devoted my life.

How you may receive this work is not for me to say; but I cheerfully submit it for your consideration, being conscious that I have fearlessly written the truth, and that the truth must live and all error must die.

Some of the principles laid down in these pages have been advanced by other writers of various denominations of Christians. Thank God! their noble movements, which have not proved altogether unsuccessful, bespeak a brighter day for the Christian Church; and it is generally conceded among Christians, that that day is fast approaching.

But that others agree with the sentiments inculcated in this volume, would afford me but little satisfaction if I did not believe that they are in accordance with the Word of God.

During the short time in which I have been preparing this work, it has been my duty to preach on my circuit every day, and not unfrequently twice and even three times a-day; consequently, it has been written at different places and under a variety of circumstances. Hence it will be nothing strange if many painful defects in the style and mechanical arrangements are discovered: for such, I ask that indulgence which the reader would wish under similar circumstances.

May the great Head of the Church bless both writer and reader, and bring them to that realm where there are no denominational lines or sectarian tenets dividing the children of God!

THE AUTHOR.

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CHAPTER I.

THE OBJECT AND IMPORTANCE OF THE WORK.

THAT we live in a very eventful period of the world's history, is generally admitted, especially by the Christian community. It would be unjust, unthankful, and untrue,

ERRATA TO FIRST EDITION.

Page	27,	Line	12, for despotism read deposition.
"	27,	"	25, for sehemes read schisms.
"	77,	"	16, for arms read aims.
"	78,	"	3, for comparted read compacted.
"	78,	"	13, for veins read reins.
"	95,	"	34, for wild read mild.
"	114,	"	9, for has been read has not been.
"	125,	"	4, for Dr. Poond read Dr. Bond.

...ver, spiritually, morally, intellectually, and physically.

One of the most happy effects of the march of truth is, the weakening, and the breaking down of the thorny hedges of sectarian prejudice and jealously, so that the different denominations of Christians are often found in each other's fold, and partaking of their respective pastures; and the pure stream of which the flock drinks, instead of being claimed as the exclusive right of one, is considered, like the literal sea, the common property of all Christians.

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THAT we live in a very eventful period of the world's history, is generally admitted, especially by the Christian community. It would be unjust, unthankful, and untrue, not to admit this. Discoveries have been made in the provinces of knowledge, unreached by our predecessors. The literature of this day is wider in its range, higher in its aim, and more real and solid in its character than in any former day. Astronomers search the heavens more extensively, geologists pierce the earth more deeply, philosophers reason more profoundly than heretofore. And law after law in the universe is being brought to light, for which praise is due to him in whom dwells all wisdom and knowledge.

And while the horizon of true science is becoming more and more harmonious, the Sun of Righteousness is emitting His quickening and renovating rays over the provinces of the moral world. The united light of science and religion is overpowering the shadows of scepticism, pantheism and atheism, and raising our race to a higher level, spiritually, morally, intellectually, and physically.

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This friendly intercourse not only proves that the in-

fluence of divine light and grace will so soften denominational asperity, (ever destructive to brotherly love and harmony), that this child of God need not be put in one cage, and that in another, like carniverous animals who would bite and devour each other unless kept apart; but that all who are truly converted to God, as sheep, may safely associate together in one fold, and under one shepherd. It also proves that sectarian peculiarities without which the various denominational names could have no existence, and all Christians would be one, are not essential to Christianity, consequently not of God; and sheds a powerful influence over the sceptical mind, favourable to the success of Christian union. All honest men, of sober reflection, will acknowledge that war with all its black progeny of concomitant crimes, is an unmitigated evil. And that its propigators overlook the domestic, spiritual and eternal interests of mankind.

The field of slaughter is black with guilt; and if there is a scene above all others delightful to devils, it must be where two Christian armies are engaged in mutual havoc and destruction.

Such a scene is unpopular, disgraceful and abhorent to the feelings of every Christian; and is contrary to the Christian obligation to love God with all the heart, and their neighbour as themselves.

God made man unarmed, but anger prompts him to lay hold of hell invented weapons; and even Christians have attacked Christians, with engines of destruction fabricated by the devil; and sacrificed human beings to the shrine of ambition, pride, revenge, and other abominable lusts and passions. But while public war, with carnal weapons, is generally admitted by all Christians, to be the curse and scourge of nations—the source of the most extended miseries of the human race—imbittering the cup of life with wormwood and gall, and adding tenfold horrors to the ravages of death; it must also be admitted that the effects of a spirit of strife, (which is the spirit of war), between individuals and families, between contending sects and denominations, and between members of the

same sect, and professors of the same creed, are the bane of civil and domestic society.

The indulgence of the contentious passions of man, the lusts that war in the members, from which all strife proceeds is the scourge of the church. Contentions here differ little from the quarrels of nations except in the extent and fatality of their ravages;—they arise from the same depraved principles or passions, are urged on similar pretences, justified on the same grounds, and are often destructive to the welfare, happiness, property and hopes of those engaged in the contest. As all strife springs from the worst passions of men, justly, therefore, should it be regarded in all its forms as a monster in nature cruel, sensual, and devilish.

Only let the depraved appetites, and virulent passions of man be subdued by the renovating influences of the peaceful spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus, and no man will any longer doubt that the true children of God are capable of dwelling together in Christ, in harmony and peace.

That the causes of strife cannot be too well understood, and that too much importance cannot be attached to the pure gospel principles of Christian union, is evident from the fact, that all spiritual blessings for time and eternity are embraced in it.

The great end and design of the holy religion of Jesus Christ, next to reconciling men to God, was to reconcile them to one another. While it enjoins on men to love God with all the heart, it requires them to love their neighbours as themselves. It subdues in them all those unfriendly dispositions which unfit them for the social enjoyment of those many blessings, spiritual and temporal, of which God has made them the happy recipients. Christianity exalts human nature by the subjugation of ambition, pride, envy, malice, insatiate lust, and every other unfriendly passion, and plants in the room thereof humane and benevolent affections which in imitation of the Lord and Saviour, disposes men to extend their love and goodness to their fellow-men. The prophet Isaiah,

styled him the Prince of Peace, long before he came into the world. For this very reason, peace is spoken of as the great and comprehensive blessing which includes all manner of happiness. Heaven itself is the region as well as the recompense of peace, and we find this the distinguishing mark and characteristic by which all men were to know who were the disciples of Christ, i. e., if they loved one another—and love thinketh no ill to his neighbour. As all men are allied together in the natural bond of brotherhood so spiritually all are members one of ~~an~~ another. God in his wisdom has so arranged their spiritual interests and the advancement of his cause as to make a social intercourse indispensable. This the Apostle hath elegantly illustrated by the familiar resemblance of the natural body, wherein there are many members and all have not the same office, but the different faculties and operations of each are for the benefit of the whole. The eyes see not for themselves but for the other members, the feet seem to support and carry about the other parts, and the hands labour for them all, yet each labors in its respective functions and employments, which if peaceably discharged, are for the harmony of the whole. Therefore, let beloved brethren in the bowels of mercy put away anger and malice and evil speaking. Let them flee all clamour and strife, let them be kindly affectioned one to another, following peace with all men, and holiness that they may see the Lord.

Again we may remark that Paul represented a tendency to strife and division, as proceeding from carnality, and in as much as to be carnally minded is death, so divisions and strife among religionists, will be attended with ruin and death, unless they are changed and become spiritually minded, which is life and peace. But notwithstanding all the Bible says about the sinfulness of schisms and divisions in the Church of God, and the necessity of unity among brethren, and notwithstanding the churches now profess the true spirit of Christianity, which is meekness and candor, love and courtesy, forbearance and forgiveness. Yet with feelings of regret

and humility we must confess that the church is divided into numerous spiritually proud, disobedient, intractable, uncourteous, disorderly and self-conceited religious corporations, each proclaiming their own orthodoxy, and the heterodoxy of all others. And with a blush of shame we acknowledge that these divisions connected with the almost invincible depravity of human nature, have formed insuperable impediments to the progress of the cause of Christ. It is still more abasing to confess that these deplorable schisms or divisions are in the main based upon some non-essential controverted tenet, which has been unduly magnified by designing men, who have fallen far below the true standard of Christian charity, and who, perhaps, for some trivial occurrence have become offended with their brethren. Prompted by a spirit of revenge, pride and desire for power, or to immortalize their names by being the founders of a new religion, they engaged sharply in a controversial war and finding sympathy among the credulous they succeeded in dividing the Church. These divisions are principally perpetuated by men of the same character, who professedly equip themselves as champions of orthodoxy. They labour with great self-complacency to demolish error, and to make these tenets, they have set up such fountains of light and vivacity as will quicken and multiply the energies of every ameliorating enterprise, and the proper boundaries of Christian fellowship and communion.

But, notwithstanding all the pretences of partizans, and all they may say about a unity of spirit being the only unity that God's word requires—and all that we can attain unto, is a unity of spirit, and all they can say about the Great Head of the Church, overruling evil for good; and on the whole these schisms are necessary: we assert unequivocally that they are of the Devil, and that a Holy God must abhor them, and we dare not paliate the evil or rest silently under it.

Every candid man who is truly born of God, overlooks all petty distinctions and feels a fraternal sympathy—an

invisible glorious bond of divine brotherhood—a union and fellowship of hearts, existing between himself and all others who have been visited by the dove-like spirit from on high; and he must be fully persuaded that the multitude of religious corporations, into which the Christian Church is divided, is contrary to the revealed will of God—antagonistic to the conversion of the world and a sinful waste of our Lord's money.

And shall this war continue? Shall the rising generation come forward with their hands and feet fettered, and their hearts burdened with the disputes of their fathers. Then will the tide of civil, social and religious improvement be stayed, to the disgrace of their predecessors. The Church is now barely able to advance to the smallest triumphs against the march of evil. It has barely enough moral power to resist the pressure from without, and maintain a bare existence. Each sect apparently striving more to maintain their respective positions, and to hold on to their adherents than to destroy sin, and advance the general cause of Christ. Let us go where we will, and we come more or less in collision with each other's interest, and in exact proportion our affections are alienated from each other, and our influence lessened upon the world.

But let us emerge from our divisions and overlook each other's imaginary defects, and adopt each other's excellencies as a band of brethren united in one holy fellowship in Christ. And marching as a united phalanx against the powers of darkness, we will give such an impetus to the cause of religion, and humanity and spirit to the Church, as would secure victory and triumph over opposing obstacles. Then a new era would dawn, the dead receive new life, and history recognize this age as one of noble conception and Christian charity.

We would not wish to be understood here as pleading for an association with the blasphemies of Socinianism, or with the formalities of the Papacy. Neither would we recommend an amalgamation with any religion which does not bring us into a close union with Jehovah him-

self; we advocate no connection with a hollow religion which merely exists in imagination, but has no place in the conscience. Such a religion may have a fair exterior but an aching heart. It may be popular in the world but it does not purge from dead works.

It has no peace or union with God, no elevation, no all-constraining love. We could form no union with such, because of their discordant natures. But we do plead for that which our Lord pleaded in his prayer on the mountain, when his sorrowful omniscient eye seemed to see our many dissensions, and their unhappy effects upon the world,—that all might be one, that the world might have incontrovertible evidence that the Father sent him.

The desirableness and necessity of such a union is felt by every Christian; but that any practicable scheme can be devised to bring it about few believe. It is generally supposed that an attempt to promote Christian union would only lead to the formation of new sects. Perhaps this might be the result if such an attempt were made under sectarian influence, and clogged with too many religious dogmas.

Let me say here that to succeed in consummating a union it is our opinion that we must first unite those branches of the Christian Church, which fully and cordially recognise each other's doctrines, discipline, mode of worship, ministry and sacraments, so that the sacrifice made will be one of feeling merely, and not of conscience, toward God. That there are various sects who come as near to each other as this cannot be denied.

There are various Presbyterian denominations, occupying in many places the same village, neighbourhood or town, bearing expenses of erecting and maintaining different churches, and supporting different ministers, while the points of disagreement are altogether trifling or imaginary, especially in Canada. The same might be said of the Baptists.

For the Methodists we blush to state that our celebrity for schism is spread throughout Protestant Christendom. The pertinacity with which we cling to hair-splitting

distinctions, even to the sacrifice of the welfare of the church, and of brotherly love and harmony, have distinguished us more than the self-denying efforts we have made or the peace of the Church; and the self-importance of some of our ministers, has been more flattered by being the Paul or Apollos of our party, than by their success in the conversion of men's souls, and the advancement of the Saviour's Kingdom.

The inconsistency of these disagreements is apparent, when we state that on all doctrinal and practical questions there is an exact agreement.

In preparing this work the object of the author is to remove those unhappy divisions which have so long estranged the children of God, and especially to promote a union among the various Methodist denominations in Canada upon equitable and Christian principles, believing that he who does it really serves the cause of God and of the Church.

When a writer vindicates a popular custom or opinion, his work will be universally read and his premises and conclusions will be readily admitted. Or, if a celebrated writer presents new opinions, almost everything will pass for solid argument.

But if a person of moderate talent summons fortitude enough to assail an evil or popular custom, his work, if it obtains the eye of the public, will not obtain credit without a careful investigation. Fortunately for the Methodist union, it will bear such an investigation, for the author purposes, in the development of the great principles of Christian charity and frugality, to present evience and answer objections in a manner becoming the great subject he discusses, hoping to move all who love God supremely, and their fellow christians affectionately, to awake to Christian duty, to arrise superior to party spirit and sectarian feeling, and cordially to unite in the advancement of the common cause of our Redeemer; and so approve himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

We know not how this work will be received. It may

be, however, proper to state here, that with regard to the particular subject considered in the following pages, that some of our readers may be unduly influenced by prejudice, arising from education association, or other causes. No man can properly investigate a subject until his mind is free from all selfish preferences. Prejudice will exert a fatal power over all our researches. How noble the man who completely frees himself of the tyrant, and sincerely and truly opens his mind and heart to the reception of unbiassed truth. Allowing the importance of the subject, and its urgency at the present time, some will say—where is the necessity of the present work?

Correspondents of the *C. C. Advocate* have agitated the subject of a union of the United Brethren, Bible Christians, New Connexion, Primitive and Episcopal Methodists; and other periodicals have deplored the unnecessary waste of means, of men, of labor, and have, therefore, recommended a union. But in most of those communications, more or less sectarian spirit has been manifested; and an evident delicacy to propose a union with the Wesleyan Methodists. But this delicacy need no longer exist, as resolutions favourable to union have been passed by business committees, and communications have heen published in the *Guardian* on the subject. We rejoice to know that our brethren have taken the initiative in this matter, and we congratulate them on the moral eminence it has given them. It is a glory of no mean order to rise above all sectarian feeling and interest, and say let us be at peace, and dwell henceforth in holy fraternity. The necessity for this work is just this, after all that has been said and written, the work is not done. The various denominations are still separate in sectarian interest in all things. So long as this state of things exist, there will continue a demand for additional effort.

The subject upon which we have entered is one of great magnitude. To do it justice requires elaborate discussions—discussions embracing a wide range of topics; reaching to the cause or causes that have effected

these existing divisions; their nature and effects; in what true union exacts the objections and hindrances to its consummation; how it can be effected, and the motives that should induce every child of God to labour to effect it.

In the discussion of this subject many things might be said that would accord with our own personal preferences and be pleasing to a portion of our readers, but would rather defeat our purposes. We shall therefore recognise no particular tenets or name as the basis of union. But give prominence to the excellencies of the various societies, leaving it for others, whose tastes prepare them for such a work, to expose their defects. If we shall in the least degree bring God's people into closer fellowship, though we may not succeed to the utmost of our wishes, we shall feel that we have not laboured in vain. Fully awake to the importance of our work, praying to God for divine guidance we proceed. Looking forward for our reward to the day, when, having droped, with our clay, the names and badges that sundered us, we will flow together and be one in heaven.

CHAPTER II.

Section 1.

SCHISMS IN THE METHODIST CHURCH IN ENGLAND.

It is generally known that the denomination called Methodists was founded in the latter part of the year 1729, by an association of four persons, at Oxford University, viz.: Messrs. Merton and Morgan, and John and Charles Wesley, who met together for the purpose of reading the Greek Testament, and engaging in mutual prayer. Subsequently they were joined by the celebrated Whitfield and others; so that in the year 1735, the number arose to fourteen, all of one heart and mind. On the evening of the first of January, 1739, John and Charles Wesley and George Whitfield, with about sixty others, attended a lovefeast, held in London. This meeting is said to have continued all night. Here the power of God came down mightily upon them, as in the days of Pentecost, and the people broke out in one voice, "We will praise Thee, O God; We acknowledge Thee to be the Lord." From this meeting the Wesleys and Whitfield went forth to labour unitedly in chapels, and in the open fields, as occasion might require; at London, Bristol, Bath, and other places, and thousands sang a new song, even praises to the Lord.

In this year the first Methodist classes were formed, and Mr. John Wesley drew up a few general rules for admitted and continued membership in the Methodist Societies.

These rules waived all tenets and dogmas, only embracing moral intention and conduct. For admission, the only condition was a desire to flee from the wrath to

come, and to be saved from sin. For continued membership, it was only required to give evidence of that desire, by doing no harm, by doing good of every possible sort, to the bodies and souls of men, and by attending on all the ordinances of God. Upon this truly catholic platform, Protestant and Papist, Calvinist and Armenian, having the form, and seeking the power of godliness, could unite with one heart and mind. Each being left to enjoy his own private opinions relative to theoretic and speculative theological questions; only prohibited from disturbing the peace and harmony of the Church by intruding into the Societies those peculiar opinions which would cause doubtful speculations. Unanimity of opinion in points of speculative theology, formed no part of the constitution, of the Primitive Methodist Church. But error, or heresy, or whatever it may be termed. for it is difficult to appropriately name it—that fatal destroyer of brotherly love, the refining of confessions of faith—was commenced by Mr. Whitfield, by declaring his full assent to the doctrines of Calvin. Mr. Wesley on the contrary, wrote and spoke very strongly against them. The one taught that a man believes because he is elected, the other taught that he is elected because he believes. These two great men, forgetting that honest differences of opinion are no sins because of those differences of sentiment separated. One preaching in one place, the other in another, each having his respective friends. The Methodists therefore were divided, one part following Mr. Wesley, and the other part following Mr. Whitfield.

Thus for a trivial cause, the first schism took place in the Methodist Church in the year 1741, and men who doubted not the genuine conversion of each other, became separate in labour, separate in enterprize, separate in houses of worship, separate in schools, separate in societies, separate in denominational interests in all things.

After the year 1744, Mr. Wesley called a Conference annually of those *preachers* and *clergymen*, who by his

permission and direction, went out to preach and form societies.

The design of those Conferences was to bring the itinerancy under some fixed order and regulations, to legislate in regard to doctrine and discipline, and to examine the moral character and conduct of those who administered in holy things.

Mr. Wesley claiming the right of superintending the preachers and societies, presided himself at forty-seven Conferences, and in the latter part of his life ordained some priests and bishops for America and Scotland, two of whom, however, never left England. Since Mr. Wesley's death, the Methodist people have been grevously divided. But these divisions respect discipline more than doctrine.

Mr. Wesley's course of legislation and government not being intrinsically consonant with the liberal spirit of christianity, by no means gave general satisfaction to the people and preachers. And no sooner did the first Conference, after his death, publish a declaration of their intention to pursue the plan he had left, than a spirit of inquiry was aroused in regard to the arbitrary power of the preachers, when to many it appeared consistent both with reason and the customs of the primitive Church, that the people should have a voice in the temporal concerns of the Church, and give their suffrages in spiritual matters. Accordingly many societies sent delegates to the Conference, held at Leeds in the year 1797, requesting that the people might have a voice in the formation of their own laws, in the choice of their own officers, and in the distribution of their own property. Two questions were proposed to the Conference: 1st, Shall delegates from the circuits be admitted into the Conference? 2nd, Shall circuit stewards be admitted into the district meetings? Men being more lovers of power, than of peace and justice, both motions were negatived. The friends of religious liberty precipitately giving up all hope of a compromise between the parties, proceeded to frame a plan for a new Itinerancy. Thus by despotism on the

one hand, and haste on the other, another schism took place in the Methodist Church, which resulted in the formation of the Methodist New Connexion. It is not necessary in this connection to notice that many other schisms have taken place in England, for causes of as little significance, and many Methodist congregations are supplied with ministers who are not in connection with either the Whitfield, Wesleyan, or New Connexion Methodists.

Section 2.

THE DISSENSIONS IN THE METHODIST CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES.

Although Messrs. John and Charles Wesley visited America as early as the year 1735, and formed societies at Savannah, N. C., in the year 1736, and were shortly afterward succeeded by the celebrated Whitfield, yet it cannot be said with propriety that Methodism was permanently established on this continent, until thirty years afterwards, when Mr. Philip Embury, prompted by an elderly lady, commenced preaching in his own house, situated in Augustus street, in the city of New York. Shortly afterwards he was joined by Captain Webb, an officer of the British Army, who in his regimental dress, with a burning zeal, and holy boldness, preached the gospel to his fellow colonists, in a bold and animated manner.

The strange anomaly of an officer in the pulpit, attired in military apparel, attracted increasingly large congregations, who not only listened to the solemn and deeply searching truths which irresistibly fell from the holy lips of that soldier of the cross; but became terrified and alarmed at their dangerous position, and in many cases were truly converted to God, and societies were formed in the city of New York, in the year 1766.

In consequence of the increase in the congregation it was not only necessary to change the place of worship for one more commodious, but to erect a chapel, which was courageously undertaken and completed, and on the 30th day of October, 1765, it was dedicated to the worship of God, a sermon being delivered in it by Mr. Embury, from a pulpit erected with his own hands.

Nor does the work stop here. While Mr. Embury attended to the societies in New York, Captain Webb visited Long Island and Philadelphia, to preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and many through his instrumentality were brought to the knowledge of the truth, and could testify that Christ had power on earth to forgive sins.

While Mr. Embury and his associates were being the foundation of such permanent good in New York, another Methodist Society was organized in Maryland, through the instrumentality of Mr. Robert Strawbridge, another local preacher from Ireland, and through his influence another Methodist Chapel was erected. About this period the necessity for more ministerial aid was obvious, and a desire was felt on the part of the Methodist societies to place themselves more directly under the supervision of Mr. Wesley. Accordingly a letter was addressed to him on the subject, soliciting his watchcare, and asking for a preacher from England who would be a man of wisdom, sound in the faith, and a good disciplinarian. On the reception of the letter by Mr. Wesley, the subject was laid before the Conference, when Messrs. Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmore volunteered their services for America. They landed on this continent, October, 24th, 1769, with several others not deputed by Mr. Wesley, among whom was Robert Williams and John King. There was yet a great demand for more preachers, and accordingly, in 1771, Mr. Wesley sent out Messrs. Francis Asbury and Richard Wright, as Methodist missionaries to the New World.

From this time the work of God went on with increasing power and success, until the political strife which

eventuated in the declaration of the Independence of the Colonies, rendered it expedient for those who espoused the royal cause to return to England.

The political revolution of 1776 resulted in throwing all the American societies into confusion, and occasioned a necessity for a change in the relation between the American and English Methodists. There was no minister of the Church of England in America who was authorized to ordain others. Methodism was without an ordained minister, and without ordinances. American ministers could not obtain ordination from the Bishops of the Established Church unless they would take the oath of allegiance. The American Methodist preachers, becoming dissatisfied with this state of things, began to ordain one another and to administer the ordinances.

Against these irregularities Mr. Asbury, who had remained in America during the war, protested, and referred the matter to Mr. Wesley. The latter felt fully convinced by Lord King's account of the Primitive Church, that in the original constitution of the Church, elder and bishop were the same office. The only distinction being conferred on the bishops by man or the common usage of the age. In accordance with this view he remarked: "I firmly believe that I am as scriptural a bishop as any man in England or Europe." He therefore asserted his right as elder or bishop to ordain others to administer the ordinances. These providential circumstances, the necessity of the case, and the importunity of all concerned, led Mr. Wesley, in the year 1784, to adopt measures for the independence of Methodist societies in the United States. Accordingly on the 2nd of September, 1784, assisted by the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., as superintendent of the contemplated Methodist Church in America, and the Rev. Mr. Creighton, both regular elders in the Church of England, Mr. Wesley ordained Richard Whacoat and Thomas Vasey elders over the Methodist societies in America. Dr. Coke and the two elders sailed at once for America. Immediately on arriving, a conference was convened at Baltimore in December of the same

year, when the Methodist Episcopal Church was established, which is a limited clerical aristocracy of the Episcopal order. The legislative, executive, and judicative powers are held in the hands of the ministry, at whose pleasure the whole system of ecclesiastical polity and usages can be modified or changed, except the restrictive rules. The term bishop was substituted for *superintendent*. The Bishops arrogated to themselves the right to superintend the temporal and spiritual affairs of the Church, to consecrate to orders, and to appoint the preachers to their several circuits and stations.

In the year 1792, James O'Kelley, a presiding elder, objected to the absolute power of the bishops in appointing the preachers to their work, and contended for an appeal to the Conference. Not succeeding in his attempt to limit the doubtful authority of these dignitaries, with the flattering assurance of becoming an ecclesiastical chief, he seceded and formed a Church called Republican Methodists. In the year 1804 another attempt was made to effect a change in the economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so that the power of the one class of its members be restricted by increasing the power of another class. But this also failed, and resulted in another schism, and the formation of the Reformed Methodist Church.

Similar causes originated another secession, and the organization, in the year 1820, of a fourth Methodist Church, known as the Methodist Society.

But the spirit of radicalism on the one hand, and of despotism on the other, were not extinguished, but were spreading like leaven through the whole lump, producing suspicion and alienation of feeling in the Church, and preparing the way for a more serious secession from it.

Animated discussions on Church polity were introduced into a periodical called the Wesleyan Repository, in which ministerial equality was argued—the episcopacy was objected to as spurious—the Lord Jesus Christ being the only head of the Church—the equal rights of ministers and laymen claimed and defended—and the

origin of power defined. This discussion attracted general attention. The consequence was the public mind was disturbed, and many people were intent upon future changes under the indefinite name of reform, without knowing or caring what their real grievances were, or to what their course would ultimately lead. Societies were formed for the purpose of concentrating strength. This liberal enthusiasm aroused the fears and ire of the authorities of the Church against those who dared to question either their theological erudition or the justice of their ecclesiastical power, and to free the Church from heretics, the work of excommunication was resorted to under the charge of inveighing against our discipline, &c. The reformers memorialized the general conference of 1828, setting forth their grievances, rights, and claims. But that clerical body, jealous of its dignified supremacy and and jurisdiction, refused redress. A convention of the expelled and their friends was called. Secession followed, which resulted in the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church.

With the progress of christian civilization slavery began to stand forth before the world in shape a monster, in nature despotic, cruel, sensual, devilish. And the opinion has obtained that while God proclaims all men equally responsible, the principle that man can be a mere article of property is a libellous absurdity. As early as 1835, the majority of the New England, New York, and New Hampshire conferences were decided abolitionists. But instead of treating the subject in a tone of christian kindness, and charitably making use of every feasible means for the universal emancipation of the descendants of Ham, an angry and exciting controversy was commenced, harsh expressions and denunciations were used, and ultra measures were adopted. Speeches, harangues, lectures, and pamphlets were brought to bear upon the public mind until, regardless of the consequences of

such feverish excitement and ultra measures, they rushed forward as they supposed to the extirpation of the great evil. These excitements continued to convulse the Church until the General Conference of 1844, when the subject presented itself in a new form. It was at this conference made known that Bishop Andrews was connected with slavery. This brought the whole matter to an issue. On the one hand for the ministers of the north to allow the episcopacy to be polluted with slavery would be deeply humiliating, and an unmitigated sacrifice of moral principle. On the other hand for the ministers of the south to yield to the despotism of a bishop because he was a slaveholder would be to acknowledge its anti-christian character. The motion that Bishop Andrew should desist from the duties of his office as long as his connection with slavery remained, being carried by vote of one hundred and ten to sixty-eight, the southern ministers severed their ecclesiastical connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church and organized a Methodist Episcopal Church south.

Section 3.

DIVISIONS IN THE METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA.

The object of this work being more particularly to promote a union of all branches of the Methodist family in Canada, we come now to speak of the introduction, progress and schemes of the Methodist church in this province. And in order that we may not compromise with evil or be charged with partiality towards any particular branch of the Methodist fraternity which may have our personal preferences, we deem it most expedient to give the essential historic facts connected with this topic in the language of the most approved authors of Methodist history, viz.—Meacham, G. P. Gorrie, and the Official Reports and Public Papers of this province.

"The first accounts indeed, which we have of Methodism in Canada, was in the year 1780: when it was brought into Quebec by the arrival of the British troops, in time of the American revolutionary war. A number of the soldiery there were, who belonged to the Wesleyan connection in England and Ireland. Among these also, was a gentleman by the name of Tuffey, who had been an occasional helper with Mr. Wesley, and who officiated as commissary of the 44th regiment. Upon their arrival, Mr. Tuffey, being zealous for the glory of God, commenced a course, which he pursued during nearly the three years stay he made in that place: which was that of preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ as he had opportunity, to such of the soldiery and citizens as were disposed to hear. Although he had not that success which followed the labors of the pious Haime on the continent of Europe, and although no particular society was formed, yet the preaching of Mr. Tuffey, no doubt, as an incidental occurrence, proved the introduction of this wide-spreading and evangelical community, which has since, and still continues to emit the radiant splendors of the Son of Righteousness throughout the Canadian populace. After the treaty of peace between Great Britain and the American colonies was ratified, the army at Quebec was disbanded—many of the officers and soldiers returned to England, and others proceeded into the Upper country, where they began to form settlements in divers parts. Mr. Tuffey returned home; but the most part, if not all, of his Methodist associates emigrated to this country; where mingling with the general population, they soon became scattered abroad.

"The tide of emigration from England and Ireland commencing the same year, [1783] bore along its current now and then, a few of the Methodists belonging to Mr. Wesley's connection, in those countries. Their number being quite inconsiderable compared with the multitude that swarmed into these regions at that time, they consequently became isolated, remote from each others' residence, which rendered social intercourse, and the public means of grace, a subject of utter impracticability.

"Having neither religious institutions or religious teachers in the land, the profligacy of its inhabitants in general, waxed more and more; and those who had pro-

fessed to follow a better course, growing cold and indifferent in their enjoyments, soon turned, most of them, to follies of the world. Our Saviour's prediction indeed, seemed most strikingly fulfilled, that *Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* It has likewise but recently been observed, by one of those first settlers, that, 'For some years together, it appeared as though there were neither law nor religion in all the country.'

"The low ebb of the religion of the cross, even for some time after this, is obvious, from the conduct of some of the clergymen of the Established Church, and the only religious teachers in the country, excepting Mr. Lyons and Mr. McCarty, of whom we shall speak presently. A person who was a faithful advocate of experimental religion, and an opposer of carnal amusements and mirth, happening to meet with the clergymen of his vicinity, was abruptly accosted, with 'You are a going to hell!' 'And how do you know that?' was the reply. 'Ah! I'm sure of it,' vociferated the clergyman: 'for you run out against dancing, card playing, horse-racing, &c., and you'll go to hell for it.' If such indeed was the principle and practice of their teachers in religion, what therefore must have been the general character of the people?

"But notwithstanding the corrupted state and profligacy of the generality of the population, a few there were, *who bowed not the knee to the image of Baal*, and who still maintained their character and dignity as christians, and as avowed votaries of the hallowed cross.

"Being so long deprived of the preaching of the gospel and the social means of grace, they became exceedingly hungry for the word of life. But residing in a new settled country, and subject to many hardships, privations a d toils, and separated withal from their mother country by the Atlantic, and from the population of the United States, by the Ontario, the St. Lawrence, and a vast and trackless wilderness, the hopes they entertained of spiritual assistance were but small, not knowing which way to look, or where to apply for relief. But the God of the faithful, who is ever mindful of his people, and who delighteth not in the death of the ungodly, in commiseration to their forlorn condition, soon opened a door whereby they received a supply of their spiritual needs; and from which time and circumstance arose that wide extended community which to this day continues to hold forth the

golden sceptre to many thousands of the Canadian populace.

"Sometime in the year 1788 commenced the emigration from the United States to Canada; which consequently opened a communication between the two countries. And in the latter part of that or the fore part of the following year, a young man, Mr. Lyons, who was an exhorter in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, repaired to Canada and engaged in a school in the township of Adolphustown.

"Possessing a deep desire for the salvation of his fellow-men, and sympathising the wretched state of those about him, he ventured forward in the name of his Divine Master, and calling the people together in various neighbourhoods, zealously exhorted them to flee the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life through Jesus Christ.

"While the attention of some was excited by novelty or curiosity to attend his meetings, the more serious and religious portion were co-operating with him by faith and prayer, for a revival of the work of God among the people. The verity of that Divine promise, therefore, was soon realized, '*that when Zion travails, she shall bring forth.*' A few profligate sinners were turned to the Lord, backsliders were reclaimed, and declining professors were aroused to a diligent application to christian duty. The aspect of religious affairs was visibly changed, though no classes or societies were formed. Mr. Lyons may therefore be considered as making the first introduction of Episcopal Methodism into Canada.

"In course of the same year Mr. James McCarty repaired to Canada and settled in Ernestown. He was formerly from Ireland; but remaining some time in the United States, and having frequent opportunities of hearing the celebrated Whitfield, when on his last mission to America, he became a convert to the Whitfieldian cause, and a zealous promoter of experimental religion. He made no pretension of any union with the Methodist connection, either in Europe or the United States; but professedly avowed himself one of Whitfield's followers.*

"Soon after his arrival, he began to warn sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and to encourage such as had tasted the comforts of religion in former days. He preached Christ to the people of the various neighbour-

* This narration we have from Mr. Robert Perry, sen'r., who was personally knowing to all the facts here recorded respecting Mr. McCarty.

hoods, who generally attended his meetings in large numbers. Being accustomed to the manners of the Church of England, he read his sermons, but with that deep feeling and engagedness, that they produced a happy and lasting effect on the minds of his hearers. Convictions were multiplied, which were succeeded by conversions; and numbers of Methodists that were in the country before him, joining heart and hand with him in the work of the Lord, a jealousy was soon excited among those who were advocates for the lifeless forms of the Church of England. Fearing that Methodism might become established, they soon raised a persecution against Mr. McCarty, in order to extinguish the flame of pure religion which had already begun to spread. There were three individuals who ranked among the officials and leading characters, that were by far the most active in that infamous and wicked scheme. Of these were the sheriff, Mr. L———, a militia Captain, Mr. C———, and the chief engineer. Mr. L———, the sheriff, often declared boldly, that *there should be no religious worship established, but that of the* CHURCH OF ENGLAND. But yet the people would assemble in private houses, and Mr. McCarty, true to his Master's work, would meet with them and preach. Greatly enraged at this, his enemies could fix on no other alternative for its abolition, than that of banishing Mr. McCarty to the United States.

"An edict had been issued from the government, that all vagabond characters should be banished from the country. They therefore seized upon this advantage to effect the expulsion of Mr. McCarty with that groundless pretext.

"As he was preaching one Sunday, therefore, at the house of Mr. Robert Perry, senior, four men armed with muskets, came to apprehend him and take him to the jail at Kingston. Being conscience smitten doubtless for their atrocious design upon the Sabbath day, they however left their arms at the house of Mr. Percy, a short distance from the place of worship. Upon the bail of Mr. Perry, for Mr. McCarty's appearance at Kingston on the following day, the men left him and returned. On their arrival at Kingston the next day, Mr. P. presented Mr. McCarty to the sheriff, and demanded his bond given the day before. But the sheriff refused absolutely to take any charge concerning him. They therefore bid him good bye, and retired. The enemies of Mr. McCarty, however, rallied the same day and thrust him into pris n;

but he was again liberated by Mr. Perry's bail. When the time had expired for which he had been bailed, he, with Mr. Perry repaired again to Kingston to receive his destiny; where, by the orders of the chief engineer, he was put on board of a boat managed by four French men, who were directed to leave him on a desolate island in the St. Lawrence. This they attempted to do, but through Mr. McCarty's resistance, they were induced to land him on the main shore, from whence he returned home to his family and friends.

"Prior to this, however, he had procured the friendship of Sir John Johnson, who had furnished him with money for the purpose of entering into prosecution against his persecutors. An attorney at Montreal, likewise warranted him a successful process, and offered his assistance in carrying on the suit. But while on his way to Montreal, or on his return, (it is not ascertained which) he was strangely and suddenly missing and has never been heard of since. It seems improbable, also, that he should have repaired to the United States, from the circumstance that he had a wife and four children, whom he dearly loved, and who have never heard of him to this day. The place where he was last seen was at Long Sault; but what ever befel him or from what cause he disappeared, is left a subject of conjecture until the great day wherein the *secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and all the hidden things of dishonesty brought to light.*

"The singular phenomena which eventually followed this affair seem to denote that an overruling and interposing providence was invisibly connected with the whole transaction from first to last. On the one hand we see the preaching of Mr. McCarty rendered effective in arousing the attention of the people to a subject of pure religion, and preparing the way for the establishment of a durable and evangelical Church: as also, the violence and malice of his persecutors, which, instead of answering their design, only served to develop the iniquity of their cause, and to confirm the public mind in favor of Mr. McCarty, and the course he pursued. At the time of his commitment to prison, indeed, Mr. Perry said to Mr. L. the Sheriff, 'You may *kill* McCarty, but a hundred more will rise at his burial, whom you and your party cannot kill.' How fully indeed has this been exemplified, and how striking its eventful scenes, which crowd around us even to the present day.

"In 1795 the Rev. Sylvanus Keeler arrived in Canada,

and travelled the Bay Quinté circuit with the Rev. E. Woolsey, while Mr Durham was traversing forests about Niagara, proclaiming life and salvation to the people of those parts.

"At this time the societies had increased to 474: the Bay of Quinté circuit numbering 270, the Oswegotchie 140, and the Niagara 64. This, indeed, was the fruit of only about four years' labour among that scattered population! Nor was it other than a mere introduction to the far greater prosperity of succeeding years: The next ensuing, indeed, aspired to the amount of 792! making an augmentation of 218 souls. The Niagara alone numbered 140.

"From this time until the year 1800 the march of these circuits might the better compare with the gliding stream, rising by moderate degrees, than with the impetuosity of the torrent hurried onward by an overswelling abundance of its watery element. Gradual and progressive in its course, and surmounting every barrier as it approached in view, increasing additions to the communion of the church, crowned the endeavours of each succeeding year.

"It would doubtless impart a satisfaction to many, were a notice of those itinerant preachers who have repaired to these climes, brought in this account as we pass along.

"It was in the year 1796, that the friends of Zion, in the Bay of Quinté circuit, were first favoured with ministry of that admirable young man, and eminent christian, the Rev. S. Coate. Although a youth at that time, and having been but two years in the itinerant work, he was an able minister of the New Testament, and his celebrity, eventually, became surprisingly great. For three successive years, he tarried among his Canadian friends, holding forth the excellences of the gospel of Christ with great zeal, universal acceptance, and glorious success.

"No less a shining light or an example of holy emulation, however, was his contemporary the Rev. Hezekiah C. Wooster. This holy man was appointed to the Oswegotchie, where he laboured with great zeal and usefulness, enduring many fatigues, reproaches and persecutions, and where, by excessive toiling for the recovery of lost souls, he laid the foundation of that disorder which terminated his useful life. He remained in the country till 1798, a part of which time he was in the Bay of Quinté circuit, and a part of which, also, he was confined and wasting away with the consumption.

"In June, 1798, he returned to his father's house, where he terminated his course, on the 6th of November following, filled with love, and an unshaken confidence of entering into eternal joys. To devout minds, how profitably pleasing the contemplation of the triumphant exit of the departed saint! *The righteous*, says the wise man, *hath hope in his death!*

"But to return: The Rev. Michael Coate repaired to Canada in 1798, and the Rev. Joseph Jewell in 1799. The former tarried but one year; but the latter, who received the charge of Presiding Elder of the district, continued in that office until the year 1803; when he was succeeded by the Rev. John Robinson, and retired to the United States.

"Prior to 1800, four preachers were the most that had been employed in the three existing circuits, which had afforded a competent supply. But this year seems to have formed an era in the history of Canadian Methodism: The population of the country had so far advanced as to admit the formation of an additional circuit, as also, to require more labourers in those that had been of some years standing. The Rev. Daniel Pickett proceeded to the settlements upon the borders of the Grand River, where his labors proved somewhat successful, in gathering souls to the communion of the church. The Rev. William Anson repaired to the Bay of Quinté circuit with the Rev. S. Keeler, Rev. James Herron to Oswegotchie, accompanied with the presiding elder of the district, and the Rev. Joseph Sawer entered in charge upon the Niagara.

"Six preachers were now moving round in these circuits, who were ardently striving to build up the Redeemer's Kingdom.

"The appendages to the former territory occupied by the itinerant ministry, formed but one part of the advantages which at this time seemed gathering around this thriving community. The public mind indeed was yielding to her institutions, and her sublime docrines were becoming more and more established and understood, among those who professed no attachment to the cause.

"Revivals progressing in divers places, were likewise gathering into the arms of the church, large numbers of worthy members, which served in an adequate proportion to build up and strengthen her spiritual walls.

"At this period the state of Methodism throughout the Province of Upper Canada, stood as follows:

"Niagara Circuit - - - -	320
"Bay of Quinté - - - - -	464
"Oswegotchie - - - - -	330
"Ottawa (alias Grand River) - -	45
Total - -	1,150

"We have thus far seen in an epitomized view of a christian community rising from the most inconsiderable events, to become, as it were, a far famed city, elevated on an eminence where the world cannot but behold its grandeur and transcendant excellences.

"The lapse of ten years indeed has thus spread these apostolic doctrines and institutions throughout the Canadian populace. What hath God wrought by the weakness of human instruments!

"Assuming an aspect far more auspicious than any previous year, the interests of the cause began to elicit a a recruit of gospel labourers, and the vigilant industry of its friends and votaries. And from this period until the year 1812, each succeeding year, like the returning wave, wafted the cause of Zion onward in a manner which exceeded the expectations of the most sanguine. The following year, however, made no acquisitions in point of numbers, but, as 'behind a frowning providence, is sometimes concealed a smiling face,' which emits the brighter splendors when the cloud is passed, so, when the transient gloom was o'erspreading the church, numberless blessings were gathering around to break in all her borders. The growing prosperity indeed was such that the returns of the ensuing year exhibited an amount of 1,600 souls.

"It was in the year 1801, that Messrs. Samuel Draper, Seth Crowell, James Aikens, John Robinson, and Caleb Morris were appoined by the New York Conference to labor in the Canada District. And in 1802, the Rev. Thomas Madden repaired to the Long Point circuit, which was now distinct from the Niagara, and which numbered the fifth circuit in the Canada District.

"Besides Mr. Madden, were likewise three others, who had not previously travelled in the province of Canada, which were Messrs. Peter Vannest, Nathan Bangs, and Nehemiah U. Tompkins.

"The following year, 1803, the number of circuits was reduced to four; which were supplied with eight preachers and the Presiding Elder of the district. Four of those in the former year had retired, and the vacancies of three of whom were supplied by the appointment of Samuel How, Reuben Harris, and Luther Bishop. A moderate increase was witnessed in some of the circuits, though the growth of Methodism in this year would in nowise compare with that in some years subsequent to that period.

"In 1804 but one new preacher was appointed to labor in Canada, which was the Rev. Martin Ruter, who received his station at Montreal. Until this time the Methodists had extended their borders no farther down the St, Lawrence than the lower boundaries of the Oswegotchie circuit.

"But not satisfied with a confinement to the precincts of one Province, so long as a probability existed of their winning souls to the church of Christ in other parts, they received the stations of Montreal, and River Le French, into the field of itinerancy, and to which latter station was appointed the Rev. Nathan Bangs. Meeting with little encouragement, after toiling for a year at these stations, the preachers repaired to a more fruitful soil, and abandoned them from their account till 1806. At this time they were re-assumed with an appendage of the Ottawa circuit, which together were constituted a Presiding Elder's district, and superintended by the Rev. Samuel Coate. From this time to 1812, Upper and Lower Canada consisted of two separate districts, and were both embraced within the precincts of the New York Conference, until the organization of the Genesee, which transpired in 1810. The district in the Upper Province, was included therefore in the last-mentioned conference, and that in the Lower Province in the former. The city of Quebec having been attached in 1806, the Three Rivers in 1809, and St. Francis in 1810, the aspect would at first sight appear somewhat promising to the success of those missionaries who were toiling for the prosperity of religion in those several stations. But, notwithstanding the constant efforts for some years, even of those who were renowned for their piety and zeal, as well as splended abilities, a darkening cloud seemed to hang about them, and their final success proved quite inconsiderable when compared with the population and the rapidity with which the work had progressed in other parts. After a succession of six

years labor to establish Methodism and raise up a people in those places, 57 souls were the greatest number at any one station. The whole number of Methodists in the Lower Province was 295, including those in the Ottawa, which consisted of 97.

Nineteen years after the planting of Methodism in this country, a pleasing spectacle, indeed, is present to the mind: all that stretch of country bordering on the St. Lawrence and the lakes Ontario and Erie, from the capital of British America to the city of Detroit, is encircled in the arms of this flourishing branch of the christian church.

"The Rev. William Case having made a missionary excursion to the latter place in the year 1809, met with a cheering prospect for the reception of the gospel, and a revival of the work of God among the destitute population. Having reared the standard of the cross, and held forth the sceptre of mercy to such as were perishing without hope, an encouraging number cast in their lots and decidedly espoused the christian cause. Meanwhile the work was rising in various other sections, in a degree which augmented the number of christian communicants to 3,495. The mission at Detroit likewise, in the following year had so far prospered as to require an additional labourer, and to admit of the formation of a four weeks' circuit, which was accordingly done, and supplied by the Rev. N. Holmes, and Rev. Silas Hopkins. By this time the societies had arrived to 130 in number. The wilderness indeed was blossoming like the rose."

"In the year 1812, the last war between Great Britain and the United States commenced, and in consequence thereof the cause of Methodism in these provinces suffered greatly. At this time the work in the Canadas was divided into two districts, namely, the Upper and Lower Canada districts, the former of which was attached to the Genesee Conference recently formed, and the latter to the New York Conference. From each of these conferences the annual supplies of preachers were sent to the respective portions of the work. At the session of the General Conference in 1812, the preachers were appointed, as usual to the Upper Canada district. Before the formal declaration of war, some of the preachers reached their appointments in safety, others, however, after the announcement was made, abandoned the design of going to Canada, and some of those who had

already reached their circuits returned to the United States. The Rev. Henry Ryan, presiding elder of the Upper Canada district, with a few other brethren, remained at his post, and was, during the continuance of the war, the sole director and superintendent of this part of the work. He attended regularly all his quarterly meetings, and called the preachers together each year and stationed them as he judged best from time to time until 1815, when peace was declared to the joy of every pious heart. The authority and power invested in Mr. Ryan by the necessities of the case, no doubt laid the foundation of the many troubles and dissensions which existed for many years subsequently, in which Mr. Ryan was a chief actor, and which finally led to his abandonment of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1827, and the organization of an independent body of Methodists in Canada known by the name of "Ryanites."

"After the close of the war of 1812–15, intercourse between the people on both sides of the line was resumed. Preachers from the United States were again appointed to the Canadas, and were permitted to mingle freely with the inhabitants and preach wherever they could collect a congregation, and as the work had suffered materially during the continuance of the war, these preachers and the members saw the necessity of labouring zealously to recover what had been lost, and their labours were crowned with abundant success throughout different parts of the provinces.

"Previous to the commencement of hostilities, Bishop Asbury in 1811, made a short visit to Canada. He, after attending the session of the New England Conference in Barnard, Vt., crossed the Green Mountains and Lake Champlain, and from Plattsburgh made his way through the wilderness known as the "Chateauguay Woods," and passing through "French Mills," (Fort Covington) reached the Indian village of St. Régis. He, from this place, crossed the St. Lawrence to Cornwall, and passed along up the banks of the latter river, stopping and preaching in different places as he went on his journey, until at length he arrived at Kingston, where he tarried several days and preached in the new chapel recently erected in that place, with great acceptability to the people. From Kingston he crossed to Sackett's harbour, having made a flying visit to a colony then and since under the protection of the flag of his native country. It was fortunate that this visit was made at this time, as hostilities soon

after commenced and before the cessation of the same the venerable bishop was called to his rest in heaven.

"While the war was raging, and the Societies in Canada were, some of them, left without ministers, the Society in Quebec sent a request to the Mission Committee in London to be supplied with English preachers; accordingly, in 1814, a missionary from England was sent to them, and Quebec, in future was left off from the American Minutes. For the same or a similar reason that an *English* preacher was sent to Quebec, it was thought best by the Wesleyan Mission Committee to send English preachers to other points in the provinces; accordingly, Montreal, Kingston, and other prominent places were soon occupied in part by English missionaries, while at the same time American preachers were duly stationed among them. This state of things induced jealousy and bickerings, not only between the members in the Societies in these places who favoured the ministrations of the one or the other, but between the preachers also, who, unfortunately for themselves, were required to occupy common ground. Complaints and remonstrances to the Wesleyan Committee on the one hand, and to the American Conferences on the other, were made for a redress of grievances. But as in the large societies, especially the one in Montreal, there were two distinct classes of Methodists (the English Wesleyan and the American Episcopal), it was not an easy matter to effect an adjustment of existing difficulties under these circumstances, as one party preferred their own countrymen to preach the gospel to them, and the other as tenaciously insisted for the same reason, on having their old pastors remain among them. At the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1816, an affectionate letter written by the Wesleyan Committee was received at the hands of the Rev. Messrs. Black and Bennett, who were appointed delegates to effect an adjustment of difficulties. In this letter a request was made that the Methodist Episcopal Church should withdraw her preachers from those places occupied in whole or in part by the English missionaries. The General Conference, however, could not see the way clear to relinquish ground which had been so long occupied by them, and wrote an answer to the committee, in which they respectfully state that they could not consistently give up any part of the Societies or chapels in the Canadas to the superintendence of the British connection. The result of this refusal was that

those Societies circumstanced as above described were supplied with both British and American preachers for a number of years. This was particularly the case with Montreal. At the succeeding General Conference of 1820, numerous memorials and petitions were presented from several circuits in Upper Canada, protesting against the occupancy of the ground by the British missionaries, and praying for the supply of preachers from the United States. The conference passed a resolution to the effect that the bishops still continue to exercise their Episcopal charge over the Societies in the Canadas, all except Quebec.

"At this conference also, was received another address from the General Secretaries of the Missionary Society in London, in which they respectfully express their regret that any misunderstanding had taken place between the two bodies in relation to the above matter, and also state that it never was the design of the committee to have their missionaries interfere with those preachers sent by the American Conferences. The committee, in connection with the above, sent a copy of the instructions given to each of their missionaries in relation to their acts when brought in contact with the American preachers. This document was sufficiently explicit to convince the General Conference that, however any of the missionaries or preachers had erred in judgment, the designs of the committee and of the British Conference were of the most friendly and pacific character, and in order that all cause for future misunderstanding might be removed, the Rev. John Emory was appointed by the General Conference as a delegate to attend the ensuing session of the English Conference, with full powers to negotiate a settlement of all existing difficulties. In accordance with his instructions, Mr. Emory sailed immediately for England, and attended the session of the latter body, held in Liverpool in August, 1820. He was received with great respect and cordiality by his English brethren, and after due consultation, and on the recommendation of Mr. Emory, it was resolved that all the Societies and chapels in Upper Canada should be given up to the exclusive charge of the American preachers, and that all the Societies and chapels in Lower Canada should be resigned to the care of the British missionaries. For the purpose of carrying out the provisions of this plan, three ministers or preachers from each conference were appointed to meet when and where convenient, and make the necessary transfers,

&c. The settlement of these difficulties in the above manner gave very general satisfaction to both preachers and people in the Canadas, and has been productive of great, and we trust, permanent good, while it affords an evidence of the Christian desire of both connections to maintain peace and unity between the two great bodies of Methodists.

"The number of travelling and local preachers in the Upper Province having become considerable, a strong desire began to be expressed on the part of many, that a separate Canada Conference should be organized, with authority to elect a bishop of their own, who should reside among them, and superintend their affairs. A petition to this effect was presented to the General Conference of 1824, and the conference so far granted the prayers of the petitioners, as to erect a separate conference for Canada, but retaining the same under the supervision of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This disposition of the case was not, however, satisfactory to all, and especially to Mr. Ryan, before alluded to, who speedily began the work of fomenting divisions and discord among the preachers, and especially among the local preachers in the Canadian department of the work. Through his agency, a convention of local preachers was called, a conference organized, and a plan of future operations adopted. On the assembling of the conference, however, in Hallowell, U. C., peace was measurably restored for the time being, through the instrumentality of Bishops George and Hedding, who pledged themselves to sanction measures in the future for the organization of an Independent Canada Conference.

"Accordingly, in 1828, the matter having again come before the General Conference at its Quadrennial Session in Pittsburgh, resolutions were adopted dissolving the compact existing between the Canada Annual Conference, and the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and authorizing the bishops to ordain a superintendent or bishop for the Canada Conference, whenever elected by the latter. At the next session of the Canada Conference held the same year in Earnestown, U. C., the proceedings of the General Conference in respect to the separation having been read and explained, it was resolved that the Canada Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church "do now organize itself into an independent Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada." The separation was thus rendered complete; so much so, that as

soon as the resolution passed, the presiding bishop rose, and declared that he no longer had any jurisdiction over them, and that they must elect a president before they could proceed to farther business; accordingly, the Rev. William Case was elected General Superintendent *pro tem.*

"The Canada Conference, although claiming to be a Methodist Episcopal Church, did not succeed in electing a permanent superintendent or bishop in the interim of the sessions of the General Conference of 1828–1832, so that at the latter period resolutions were passed, allowing the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States to ordain any such superintendent within the ensuing four years, should one be elected, but for reasons which will hereafter be apparent, no such officer was ever elected.

"The province of Canada being subject to the British crown, a jealousy had long existed on the part of its statesmen in relation to the institutions of the United States. This jealousy ripened into hatred during the war of 1812–15, and although at the close of the same actual hostilities ceased, feelings of animosity still remained. This rendered the situation of the American preachers an unpleasant one, and led, as we have just stated, to the final separation of the Canada Conference from the parent body. A desire to be identified with whatever is British in its nature and origin, led the members of the Canada Conference to seek a union with their brethren in the English Conference. Such an union was formed in 1833, the Canada Conference changing its title of Methodist Episcopal Church, to that of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada In changing their title, they also changed their church polity in several respects, and in forming the union with the British Conference, they consented to receive their president annually from the latter body.

"Although this union gave satisfaction to the majority of the travelling preachers and members of the Methodist Church in Canada, it produced much uneasiness and dissatisfaction in the breasts of many who were ardently attached to the usages and ecclesiastical government of the Methodist Episcopal Church. While proposals for a union were being made, several conventions were held in which it was resolved, on the part of those dissatisfied with the contemplated arrangements, not to consent to the union, if it should be effected. The most prominent

opposer of the union was the Rev. Joseph Gatchel, a superannuated member of the Canada Conference, who, with numerous local preachers and members, resolved to adhere as far as possible to the discipline and polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Accordingly, in June, 1834, or about eight months after the union, Mr. Gatchel, who refused to consent to it, and retained his name of Methodist *Episcopal* minister, called an annual conference to be held in Yonge Street. In answer to the call, several located and local preachers met together, but no member of the Wesleyan Conference obeyed the summons to attend. Mr. Gatchel, claiming that the main body had seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that he only constituted the Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, proceeded in due form to re-admit several located preachers, and receive other preachers on trial. The time and place of the next annual conference was fixed upon, and a special General Conference was appointed to meet in Belleville, Feb., 12, 1835, for the purpose of electing a General Superintendent, *pro tempore*. At the General Conference thus appointed, the Rev. John Reynolds was elected to this office, and at a subsequent General Conference, held in June of the same year, he was elected a bishop, and ordained by the elders present. Since the above period, the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada has gained many adherents and members, so that at the present time it may be said to be in a flourishing state, having a large number of chapels and Societies embraced in several presiding elders' districts, and two annual conferences.

"In the meanwhile, the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in Canada, while repudiating the action of the "Episcopals," proceeded, acording to the plan of union, in holding her annual conferences, and administering her discipline, for several years, until at length dissatisfaction arose on the part of the British Conference, in relation to some of the acts of the Canadian brethren, and the action of the Canada Conference in relation thereto, which led to a disruption between the two bodies. In consequence of this disruption the British Conference included the territory in the upper province within her field of missionary operations, and appointed preachers to the most important places in Canada. This state of things could not long continue without producing the most unpleasant and sometimes violent altercations between the adherents of the one or the other conference, so that with the Canadian

Wesleyans, the British Wesleyans, the Methodist Episcopalians, and the remains of the "Ryanite" secession, all in operation at one and the same time, all presenting conflicting claims, all having friends and supporters, and each branch having its bitter foes, a long-continued scene of turmoil, contention, and strife, characterized the proceedings of our Methodist brethren in Canada, which state of things they no doubt all deplored, but had no remedy to heal the wounds thus made. After enduring this state of things for some time, overtures were made by the Canada Wesleyan Conference to the British Wesleyan Conference, for a cessation of ecclesiastical hostilities, and the re-union of the two bodies, and in 1847 an amicable arrangement was effected in London, through the instrumentality of Messrs. Ryerson and Green, on the part of the Canadian, and a Committee of the British Conference. This arrangement re-united the two branches, and since the period referred to, the Canadian Conference has been presided over by a president annually appointed by the English body."

In addition to the above we may remark that the Methodist Societies in Upper Canada, rigidly opposed Church and State connection in the Province, and argued that such a Connection would make Christianity a pensioner upon political benevolence rather than the power of God unto salvation—a tool of the state rather than a bright emanation from heaven—which subjected them to misrepresentation by the favoured clergy of the would be dominant Church, and brought upon them the following rebuke from His Excellency Sir John Colborne, in answer to an address of the Conference, requesting him to transmit to His Majesty, their address on the subject of the Clergy Reserves.

"Address of the Canada Conference of the Methodists to Sir John Colborne.—Dated, September 8th, 1831, as published in the Conference Paper.

"*To His Excellency Sir John Colborne, K.C.B., Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, Major-General commanding His Majesty's Forces therein, &c., &c., &c.*

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:—We, His

Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects *the Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, take the liberty to enclose to Your Excellency an address to His Majesty with accompanying documents, most respectfully requesting Your Excellency to transmit them to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, to be laid at the foot of the Throne.*

"*Permit us to avail ourselves of this opportunity to express our best wishes for Your Excellency's spiritual and temporal prosperity, and to assure Your Excellency of our sincere desire and firm determination to second Your Excellency's exertions for the public good, by doing all in our power to promote the interests of morality and pure religion, the essential precepts of which are, Fear God and honor the King.*

"By order of the Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada.

"(Signed) W. CASE, *President.*
"(Signed) JAMES RICHARDSON, *Secretary.*

York, Sept. 8, 1831.

To which His Excellency was pleased to reply:—

"GENTLEMEN:—I shall not fail to transmit to the Secretary of State your memorial addressed to the King.

"In returning my best thanks for your good wishes, I may venture to affirm that the assurances of your desire and determination to promote the interests of pure religion, will afford general satisfaction; because *a very unfavorable impression has been made from one end of the Province to the other as regards an imputed secular interference on the part of your preachers*: an impression I am afraid, that must tend to counteract the salutary effects that ought to result from the active piety and zeal of your Society. I refer with reluctance to the public opinion formed of the doctrines inculcated by ministers of every denomination of Christians, or the principles which they are said to espouse: but on this occasion I think it right to acquaint you that although the character of your ministers is probably aspersed, and although they may not as is said, take advantage of the influence acquired by their sacred office, to conduct the political concerns of the people committed to their care, to be instructed only in the words of eternal life, yet, *I cannot imagine that if there were not some ground for the imputation, of their inconvenient attention to secular concerns, a desire for the return of the Wesleyan Missionaries to*

resume their pastoral labors in this Province would not have been generally expressed. This conclusion may be erroneous, but I am in some measure led to it from the reports which I have received of the absurd advice offered by your Missionaries to the Indians, and their officious interference; if any reliance can be placed on the statements of the Indians themselves, the civilization of whom the Superintendents of the Indian Department are endeavoring to accomplish.

"With our excellent Constitution in this Province, I trust we shall always find a sufficient number of supporters of Civil and Religious freedom, without the interference of the ministers of the Gospel. *Your preachers, whether they are brought from the United States, or any other foreign country, will, I hope experience, while they act honestly and respect British Institutions, the same protection and encouragement, and freedom, which all Americans enjoy, who have found an asylum among us,* and choose to live under the British Government in this Province, and securely enjoy the rights of our own Colonists—which are assured to every denomination, party, sect or persuasion.

"Your dislike to any Church Establishment, or to the particular form of Christianity which is denominated the Church of England, may be the natural consequence of the constant success of your own efficacious organised system. *The small number of our Church is to be regretted, as well as that the organization of its Ministry is not adapted to supply the present wants of the dispersed population in this new country:* but you will readily admit that the sober-minded of the Province are disgusted with the accounts of the disgraceful dissensions of the Episcopal Methodist Church and its separatists—recriminating memorials, and the warfare of one Church with another. *The utility of an Establishment depends entirely on the piety, assiduity, and devoted zeal of its Ministers, and on their abstaining from a secular interference, which may involve them in political disputes.* The labours of the Clergy of Established Churches in defence of moral and religious truth, will always be remembered by you who have access to their writings, and benefit by them in common with other Christian societies. *You will allow,* I have no doubt, on reflection, *that it would indeed* (with the inconsiderable population of the Province) *be imprudent to admit the rights of societies to dictate on account of their present numerical strength, in*

what way the lands set apart as a provision for the Clergy shall be disposed of. Ample information on the question has been laid before the Imperial Parliament, and no inconvenience while it is pending can arise in respect to the occupation of these lands: for there are more acres now offered for sale than purchasers can be found for them.

"*In a few years the Province will be peopled by millions of our own countrymen, and many of the arrangements of His Majesty's Government will have reference naturally to the population of the Mother Country, destined to occupy the Waste Lands of the Crown.*

"*The system of Education* which has produced the best and ablest men in the United Kingdom, *will not be abandoned here, to suit the limited views of the leaders of Societies, who perhaps have neither experience nor judgment to appreciate the value or advantages of a liberal Education.* But the British Government will, I am confident, with the aid of the Provincial Legislature, establish respectable schools in every part of the Province, and encourage all societies to follow their example.

"*A Seminary, I hope, will not be termed exclusive, which is open to every one*, merely because the classical masters are brought from our own Universities.

"It may be mentioned, without giving offence to the members of any church or persuasion, *that there are few individuals who think that Ministers of the Gospel can conduct political journals,* and keep themselves unspotted from the world, and put away all bitterness and wrath, and clamour and evil speaking, which the attacks of their adversaries may engender, or that their avocation will not force them to spend their time like the Athenians in their decline, in nothing but 'either to tell or to hear some new thing,' I am persuaded that the friends of religion will strongly recommend ministers of the Gospel to labour to increase the number of christians, rather than the number of their own sects or persuasions, to close their churches and chapels against all political meetings, and indeed all meetings for the transaction of secular business, and never to permit their consecrated places to be profaned by the party spirit of the hour."

In separating from the M. E. Church, the Wesleyans abandoned those principles which were displeasing to the ecclesiastical dependants of the Church of England,

and the crafty politicians composing the corrupt family compact; and such a mutual good understanding established between those liberal purchasers and those ministers who were ambitious for government patronage, that a share of government money was extended to and received by them, as early as 1833, as is proved by the following extract from the seventh report of the Committee of the House of Assembly on grievance, 1835.

"The ministers of these Ecclesiastical establishments derive their official pensions entirely from the public revenue raised within the Province, and receive besides an income from their congregations; England pays no part.

"There were paid out of the Provincial chest, without any vote of the Legislature, in 1832, 1833, and 1834, to the four Established Churches, £40,441, of which £15,-284 were paid in 1834.*

METHODISTS.

"The 'Canadian Wesleyan Methodist Conference' received £800 in 1833, and £380 in 1834; these sums were to be applied to the building of Chapels, &c.

"The 'British Wesleyan Methodist Conference' formerly the Methodist Episcopal Church, received £1,000 in 1833, and £611 in 1834, to be applied (as is stated to the Lieutenant Governor by the Rev. Joseph Stinson,) 'to the erection or repairing Chapels and School-houses, and defraying the general expenses of the various Missions in our charge."

"Your Committee were unable to obtain an account of the expenditure of these monies in detail. It appears inseed that no such accounts had been transmitted to the Government Office in either of these years."

"*Government House*, 15*th March*, 1833.

"GENTLEMEN:—I am directed to acquaint you, with reference to the applications to His Majesty's Govern-

* £15,284 paid to the Clergy of 4 particular denominations in one year, is rather at variance with a portion of Viscount Goderich's despatch, that shewing undue preference to the Church of Eugland was at variance with his whole course of policy, more especially as £9,602 of that sum was given to that denomination.

ment from several religious denominations for assistance in the present state of the Province to enable them to build churches or chapels. The Lieutenant Governor has been authorized to place at the disposal, this year, of the British Wesleyan Conference the sum of £900, and £600 at the disposal of the Canadian Wesleyan Conference, to be applied in erecting such churches or chapels as may be required; and I am to inform you, that on your stating the manner in which the grant is to be applied, His Excellency will order the amount to be placed at your disposal.

"I am, &c.,

"WM. ROWAN.

"The British Wesleyan Conference and the Canadian Wesleyan Conference."

COPY.

"*Government House, Toronto,* 4th July, 1834.

"GENTLEMEN:—I am directed to acquaint you, with reference to the applications of His Majesty's Government from several religious denominations for assistance in the present state of the Province to enable them to build churches or chapels. The Lieutenant Governor has been authorized to place at the disposal, this year, of the British Wesleyan Conference the sum of £550, to be applied in erecting such churches or chapels as may be required; and I am to inform you, that on your stating the manner in which the grant is to be applied, His Excellency will order the amount to be placed at your disposal.

"I have, &c.,

"WM. ROWAN.

"The Wesleyan Methodist Conference."

To His Excellency Sir John Colborne, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Upper Canada, Commander of His Majesty's forces therein, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:—I had this day the honor of receiving through the Rev. James Richard-

son, a communication from Your Excellency, respecting a grant of £550 to the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference; the order for which Your Excellency is pleased to say you will give on being made acquainted with the manner in which the above sum is to be appropriated during the ensuing year. While on behalf of the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference and Missionary Society, which I have the honor to represent in this Province, I gratefully acknowledge this pecuniary assistance, I beg permission to inform Your Excellency, that it will be applied to the erection or repairing of chapels and school houses, and defraying the general expenses of the various mission stations in our charge.

"I have the honor to be,

"Your Excellency's very obedient

"Humble servant,

"JOSEPH STINSON.

"*City of Toronto, July* 7, 1834."

COPY.

"GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
"*Toronto, 4th July*, 1834.

"GENTLEMEN:—I am directed to acquaint you with reference to the applications to His Majesty's Government from several religious denominations, for assistance in the present state of the Province, to enable them to build churches or chapels. The Lieutenant Governor has been authorized to place at the disposal, this year, of the Canadian Wesleyan Conference the sum of £350, to be applied in erecting such churches or chapels as may be required; and I am to inform you, that on your stating the manner in which the grant is to be applied, His Excellency will order the amount to be placed at your disposal.

"I am, &c.,

"WM. ROWAN.

"The Canadian Wesleyan Conference."

"*Resolutions of the Canadian Wesleyan Conference.*

"RESOLVED:—That should His Majesty's Government be pleased to grant pecuniary aid to the Canadian

Wesleyan Methodists, according to the application that has been made to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor, Sir John Colborne, for that purpose.

"If such aid shall be restricted to the building or affording aid in building chapels and houses of worship, or in paying for such as have been built and not wholly paid for, the same is hereby directed to be applied in the following manner, that is to say:—

"Towards the building a house in the town of Peterborough—Peterborough Circuit, Newcastle District.

"For the Brick Chapel in Grantham at the Ten Mile Creek, in the District of Niagara.

"For the chapel of 30 Mile Creek in Clinton, District of Niagara.

"Towards the building a house on the Lansdown Circuit, in the Johnstown District, in the township of South Crosby or Bastard.

"For a chapel in the Town of London, in the London District.

"To one in St. Thomas, District of London.

"To one in Vienna Village, same District.

"To one in the Town of Hallowell, Prince Edward District.

"To paying for the sum due on a chapel building in the Township of Yonge, in the Johnstown District.

"To paying for the sum due on a chapel in the City of Toronto, if circumstances should make it necessary.

"RESOLVED:—That John Willson, Esquire, is hereby fully authorized to apply to His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor for any aid that may be granted to this Conference, and receive the same, and to sign any acquittances or give any receipts that may be necessary in the premises, and to distribute the same in the manner hereinbefore directed, and to prepare and lay before the next annual Conference a true and faithful account of all monies by him received on the grounds of the aforesaid resolutions.

"By order of the Conference,

"A. K. McKENZIE,
"JOHN FLANAGAN, *Sec'y.*

"*Hamilton, Newcastle District, 19th June*, 1834."

True philanthropy and universal kindness is the basis of Christianity. While men love God supremely, they are bound to love their neighbours as themselves. Selfishness has no place in the religion of Jesus Christ, and what the broad principles of true benevolence are the Saviour of the world beautifully illustrated to an impertinent lawyer, who maliciously proposed ensnaring questions to him, by relating an instance of a man falling among thieves and left in distress, which condition called for sympathy and generosity abstracted from all selfish considerations. In connection with this narative Jesus introduces two disgraceful instances of unmitigated selfishness, and insensibility to the welfare of others, and one example of unselfish tenderness, generosity, and compassion. The want of humanity was found in a Priest and a Levite, whose pretences and teachings were a religion of love, and in whose practice there was a total disregard to its sacred principles. And this is no fictitious character. We often find selfishness wrapped up in the garb of religion which none but the truly benevolent should wear; could that Priest and Levite have secured to themselves gain and power, could they have monopolized a large and plentiful estate, and the liberties of the family of the distressed, doubtless in view of personal interest, they would not have passed by on the other side, but in their sanctity would have graciously stooped to his misfortunes and relieved his distresses. True benevolence would prompt gratuitous assistance and not monopoly. And behold says the Saviour a Samaritan passes that way, one who on the account of national or religious differences held himself discharged from all acts of kindness toward a Jew, for the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans. This Samaritan, free from all thirst for power, or gain, or monopoly, influenced by the noble feelings of benevolent generosity, had compassion on him, went to him, bound up his wounds, set him on his own beast, took him to an inn, took care of him, and paid the sixpence gratuitously. To drop this narative and make an application of it to this subject.

We remark that it is apparent from all that has been said, that in Canada there existed a truly legal, orthodox, and independent Methodist Episcopal Church before the Wesleyan missionaries visited its shores. It is also evident that Mr. Wesley designed that the Methodist Church in America should be free from all subjection to the English Conference, otherwise he would not have ordained an independent Bishop for this continent. And we are not left to mere inference on this point, for Mr. Wesley's intention relative to the independency of the American Methodists is plainly expressed in a letter written by him and addressed to Dr. Coke, Mr. Asbury, and the brethren in North America, dated Bristol, September 10th, 1784, in which he declared that no one either claimed or exercised any ecclesiastical authority over them at all, and as the American brethren were disentangled he dare not entangle them, and he further remarked that they were now at full liberty to follow the Scriptures and the primitive Church, and that he judged it best that they should stand fast in the liberty wherewith God had made them free. And although he sent them money and men like the generous Samaritan, having no thirst for monopoly, did not ask them for the titles of their vineyards, dwellings and temples. But a more priestly and Levitical spirit influenced the minds of his Ecclesiastical grandsons, who visited Canada. And allow us to say here, that, although we, in the most charitable language, touch with reluctance, and despatch with impatience, this delicate part of our subject, yet our conscience is not so timorous as to provoke the censures of posterity by shrinking from a faithful discharge of that duty we owe to mankind, in order to shelter ourselves from the ire of narrow-minded spiritual tyrants, and those whose religious superstitions will not allow them to think for themselves. In Upper Canada there was prospective wealth, a rich and prosperous people, much property already accumulated, in addition to which there was one-seventh of the broad acres of Canadian soil, set apart by the Imperial Government for the maintenance of a Protestant Clergy

in the Province. The Legislative Assembly of Upper Canada, supported by the liberal populace, among whom were the Methodist Ministers and members, were taking measures for the secularization of the funds arising from the sale of these lands. The mercenary Priests of the Church of England, assiduous to retain their emoluments in order to secure themselves against the demands and clamours of the people, obsequiously surrendered their exclusive claim to the benefit of the Clergy Reserve fund, and in order to secure the assistance of all who would ignominiously sacrifice civil and religious principle and freedom to avarice, consented that not only the Presbyterians and Methodists but also the Roman Catholics should share with them in these government endowments, against which the Methodists had so earnestly remonstrated. It also became necessary for the corrupt and crafty politicions forming the "Family Compact" who were held in public abhorrence, to shelter themselves from the indignation of a dissatisfied people, and to counterbalance the power exerted against them by the liberal part of the community, they opened the prospect of exhaustless treasures to those whose ruling passion was avarice, by offering to the Wesleyans of England pecuniary aid from the Clergy reserve fund, if they would send missionaries to this Province. To establish this assertion to the satisfaction of our readers we quote the following from a letter addressed by the Rev. R. Alder to Lord John Russell, dated, Wesleyan Mission House, Hatton Garden, London, 29th of April, 1840.

"In consequence of proposals which were made in the year 1832, by the Earl of Rippon, then Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, to the Wesleyan Missionary Committee, to induce them to extend their Missionary operations in Upper Canada, they resolved to do so, and arrangements were immediately made for carrying that resolution into effect. My Lord, the Government of Earl Grey was induced to make this offer to the Wesleyan Missionary Committee by patriotic as well as by religious considerations; and if the testimony of

Lord Seaton* and other distinguished individuals were to be depended upon, a wiser arrangement could not have been proposed. On the grounds of this arrangement an annual grant is secured, on the faith of the Royal word, to the Wesleyan Missionary Committee, to assist them in meeting the expense which it necessarily involves." And further:

"The union which now exists between the British Conference and the Conference in Upper Canada, took place about a year after I had—as the representative of the Wesleyan Missionary Committee—completed, at Toronto, with Lord Seaton, all the arrangements connected with the offer made by Lord Goderich to the Committee, having proceeded from England to Canada for that purpose."

With these strong assurances of gain and monopoly, the British Conference sent to Canada the Rev. Robert Alder, whose insatiable avarice and peculiar appetites prepared him for the work, who being abetted by the Messrs. Ryerson, men of like character and disposition, succeeded in inducing the majority of the Methodist Episcopal Conference to secede and become a dependant branch of the British Wesleyan Societies, carrying with them all who were accustomed to reverence the counsels of the Synod more than their own dignity and freedom. In separating from the M. E. Church and uniting with the Wesleyans, they submitted their former principles and liberties to the following humiliating conditions

1st. They were to renounce Episcopacy, and that form of Church Government to which they had so tenaciously adhered.

2nd. They were to give up their independence as a Church, which they had secured in the year 1828, and receive a President from the British Conference.

3rd. They were to give up the control of the Indian missions to the British Missionary Committee.

4th. They were to concede to the British Missionaries

* Known in Upper Canada in 1832 as Sir John Colborne, Governor of Upper Canada.

the right of saying who should be members of Conference.

5th. They were to change the scriptural usage of divers orders in the ministry to that of one.

6th. They were to suppress the office of Local Preacher to a merely nominal existence, and deprive the worthy body bearing that office of ordination and the privileges of administering the sacraments.

The reader will perhaps be better satisfied in relation to the correctness of the foregoing statements by reading the following letter addressed by the Rev. R. Alder, first President of the Wesleyan Conference in Upper Canada, to the Lieutenant Governor, Sir John Colborne, dated,

Montreal, 27th August, 1832.

"Sir,—I beg permission to inform your Excellency that I have attended the Conference of the Methodist Church of Upper Canada, and to state confidentially for your information, the result of the interview with that body—a result much more favourable than I allowed myself to anticipate.

"They have resolved that their disciplinary system shall be so altered as that it may be made to agree in all its parts with British Methodism, *as speedily as prudence, and a due regard to the safety of their chapel property, will allow.* The Conference has already agreed to the abolition of Episcopacy, which was a great barrier in the way of the entire union. They have consented to place the whole of their Indian Missions under the exclusive management of our Missionary Committee. In addition to these, and other concessions of importance, I have required that no man who continues to pursue any secular calling shall be ordained to the office of the ministry; *that the British Conference shall send to Canada such ministers as it may seem fit to appoint; that no preachers shall be taken out in Canada without the consent of that body;* that Kingston shall be exclusively occupied by a Missionary from the British Conference, as it is a central station between the two Provinces; that the propriety of continuing Camp Meetings shall be seriously considered, and that the *Christian Guardian* shall, for the future, be an exclusively religious journal. The Canada Conference has appointed a representative to proceed to England,

where the whole matter will be finally settled. Rev. E. Ryerson has been appointed to this office. This, your Excellency, was done at my earnest request, as he and his brothers were the most eloquent advocates for the proposed alterations.

" From these statements your Excellency will perceive that I have *rigidly adhered to those great principles to which I had occasion to advert during the* SEVERAL *interviews with which you were pleased to honour me*, and it is only an act of justice to the Canadian Conference to state that my frankness in stating my sentiments and principles, *and my firm adherence to them*, contributed to procure for me, in no small degree, the confidence of a large portion of that body, of which a strong proof is furnished in the fact, that an unanimous request has been addressed to the British Conference, that in the event of the proposed arrangements being carried into effect, I may be appointed as their first President, with the understanding that I shall remain for two or three years, and exercise a general superintendence over the Methodist societies in both Provinces.

" I feel a strong conviction that for many reasons I should accept of such an appointment, especially as I possess a degree of local knowledge and influence which it would require a stranger some time to obtain. *May I venture to ask your Excellency's opinion of such an arrangement, as it would have great weight with our Missionary Committee, as well as with myself.*

" I shall return to England by the way of Halifax, in which place I shall remain till the middle of September; after which my address will be, 8 Portland Street, Kingsdown, Bristol.

" I remain, &c.,

" (Signed,) " R. ALDER.

" His Excellency Sir John Colborne,
" K.C.B., &c. &c. &c."

From the above statements we infer that the English Missionaries did not visit our shores and insidiously gain authority over the Methodist community, merely to extend their Mission operations and the cause of Christ, but because there were vineyards planted, dwellings and temples erected, and honours and emoluments promised. Had they sought for truly missionary fields, Lower Canada was quietly surrendered, and the Hudson Bay Territory

was before them, and numerous Papist and Pagan countries in the boundaries of the Eastern Hemisphere. It cannot be argued with the least shade of truth, that Upper Canada is more properly missionary ground in the common acceptation of that term than England itself. Neither can it be said that there are not in Upper Canada ministers enough to supply the demand. Nor can the superior talent of the English Missionaries be pleaded, in order to palliate the intrusion. Upper Canadians are not a barbarous people. They have schools, colleges, seminaries, and academies, which will compare favourably with those of England, and the rose of Sharon has bloomed with equal fragrance and beauty in Canadian soil. Canadian ministers stand as high in the scale of intelligence, beneficence, strength and dignity, and every other qualification for the work on this Continent as their English brethren, their race, language, and government being the same. Nor is it a mitigation of the sacrifice of Christian charity, honesty, and liberty, which was made in the unrighteous monopoly which we have sparingly glanced at, connected with the schism now under consideration, that some emigrants from England had connected themselves with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, preferring English usage and Old Country preachers, were favourable to the movement. Others (with more justice) tenaciously preferred Canadian pastors and usages, and their freedom. And it accords with reason that strangers coming to our country should relinquish their national preferences in religious forms as well as in other matters, and assimilate to the peculiarities of Canada.

But the question now arises, shall the present ministers of the various Methodist Churches perpetuate division and strife, engendered by the perfidious intrigues of men whose disgraceful departure from the ministry has already afforded a sufficient evidence of their lack of disinterested zeal for the advancement of the cause of God, and a satisfactory proof of their perverted appetites and unsatiable thirst for government emoluments and honours.

Many of the present acting ministers of Methodist Churches were not born at the time of these deplorable separations, and many others were of tender age and have been brought into their respective Churches more by accident than by choice, and they cannot in any sense be accountable for the guilt or shame of these schisms. They now all occupy in one point of liberty and justice equal ground, and they are positively all one, that is, if they are born of the Spirit. And shall they attach each to themselves the guilt and responsibility of schism by perpetuating it? In closing this chapter we pray that all unholy thoughts and suggestions, all unhallowed reasoning and clamour, and unsanctified desires and confusion of tongues, which is hurtful and unprofitable may cease, and that all who truly desire the highest religious results, may learn to recognize their relationship as brethren, being the true sons of God, and commence to live in peace, so that as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, the God of peace may be round about his people.

CHAPTER III.

NATURE AND SINFULNESS OF CHURCH DIVISIONS.

In our calm moments of reflection we behold with mingled feelings of horror, indignation, pity and shame, the various branches of the church of Christ who acknowledge each other to be evangelical, having the same God, the same spirit, the same worship, divided by distinctions of such inconsiderable significance! And it is truly painful for us to confess the real cause of our strange and fatal divisions, which are contrary to the true principles of our holy religion, dishonourable to christianity, and form insuperable impediments to the conversion of the world. No man can candidly examine the origin of all the various schisms of the evangelical Church, but he must be convinced that they have been provoked on the one hand—

First, By an attempt of the authorities of the Church to deprive its members of the rights of intellectual freedom and private judgment, and to confining them to creeds and confessions established by the wisdom of the synods.

Secondly, By the despotism exercised by the clerical dignitaries of the Church, according to their ecclesiastical rank.

Thirdly, By an attempt to amalgamate Church and State, and ministers reaching, both in Church and State, after honours and emoluments to satiate their rapacious ambition and avarice.

Fourthly, By the authorities of the Church (instead of healing differences in the spirit of christianity) making their severest censures rest on those who presumed to follow the dictates of conscience far enough to deviate from their superior wisdom, which censures

only produced a spirit of discord and inconsistency. On the other hand, these divisions were provoked by the loose wandering imagination of credulous aspirants and spiritual rebels, whose zealous obstinacy was prompted by motives of ambition or avarice. The actions of this class of men being more controlled by passion than subjected to reason, their enthusiasm is always indefatigable in the cause they espouse, and finding themselves soon supported by men of like disposition of mind, whose stern fanaticism prepare them to second any measure supposed to be hostile to imaginary oppression, they rush forward courageously, frequently taking the advantage of the ambiguity of words, not to reconcile differences, but to enflame the minds of the people. And it is impossible for us to determine how far the zeal of such prevail over their good sense and love for the cause of Christ. Systems of religion and Church government established by men, whatever their excellences, and with however great complacency they may be regarded by their adherents, are always imperfect. These defects being discovered by the designing and taken as specimens, the whole system is judged and pronounced upon accordingly. Hence the establishment and rigid enforcement of extensive ecclesiastical laws and restrictions, although professedly designed as securities against error and schism, have rather created it and caused divisions. And when we turn over to history to find the fruit of these discords, we have to lament over the well-attested evils and disorders which thicken and multiply on the pages, that are the natural effects of religious divisions, and which have disturbed the peace and dishonoured the triumph of the Church. Oh how humiliating to confess that the Church which should be the representation of heaven on earth has been converted by discord into the image of hell itself! The apparent enmity that existed between professing christians has surpassed, at times, their enmity against sin; each claiming all virtue and orthodoxy for himself, and ascribing all guilt and heresy to his brother,

who professed the same pure and peaceable religion. The philosophic tendency of such a course of conduct, on the part of those who are styled by the gospel the lights of the world, is to lead unregenerate men to regard them as monsters, while they profess sanctity, and to drive the world to infidelity.

These separations among christians have never done any good but much evil. No one can deny that a very fruitful source of apathetic indifference, scepticism and infidelity is the wrangling and strife among the professed followers of Christ. Numerous cases might be given of those who have turned from the authority of the Scriptures, avowedly in consequence of the acrimonious contentions engendered by party strife, and the most potent truths and eloquent appeals fail to dissipate that apathetic indifference, *scepticism* and *infidelity*, which is the natural fruit of the animosities and disunion among those who should co-operate in their opposition to sin and advocacy of virtue.

Men are the same, God's word is the same, and His spirit is the same now, as they were when hundreds yielded to Jesus Christ from the influence of a single sermon. But God's people are not the same. Then they were altogether and all spake the same thing. Now every man "seeks his own," and contradicts his brother to keep his peculiar views of difficult questions before the people. The religious views of the ungodly are generally drawn from such exhibitions of religion as force themselves upon them, and when the unconverted see those who profess religion repelling others who equally profess it, declaring them to be entirely wrong, while they in turn vociferate the same arrogance to their assailants, it is no marvel if they should turn from all these controversialists, and philosophically resolve to eat, drink, and be merry in this life, and take the chances for the next. And it may be safely affirmed that Omnipotence itself cannot bring so much good out of these divisions that prevail among christians, as would naturally arise from the exhibition of that union and love

which the word of God enjoins, and which christians pretend to cherish. Again, divisions among Protestants is a great bulwark to Popery. The votaries of the Papacy, whose minds are not in a proper condition to form clear views about the finely spun theories which divide Protestants, conclude that Protestantism cannot be the true religion, because its contentions and divisions demonstrate it rather to be of the devil than of God. And how can we expect the world to be converted by such a disjointed instrumentality? Oh that Protestant Churches who denominate each other evangelical would remove the non-essential, denominational lines which divide them! Oh that they would not allow their prejudices to gain so complete a mastery over their judgment and love of Christ, as is manifested in that sectarianism which has excluded a large portion of the christian world from christianity! Oh that they would cultivate humility and be willing to allow that they may themselves be guilty of as great errors as those of which they accuse their brethren, or of an error even of a nature more heinous in the sight of God! Oh that christians would feel the weight of responsibility which rests upon them to cultivate the spirit of Christ!

We mourn over the superstitions of Mahommedism, but what created them? Mahommed discovered the divisions, corruptions, and superstitions which the Jews had introduced into their religion. And being satisfied that a religion emanating from one God should be one body and one spirit; he formed the scheme of founding a new religion, or, as he expresses it, of replanting the only true and ancient one, which consists chiefly in the worship of one God.

With sorrow we have witnessed the rapid advancement of Mormonism. Its founder tells us that when he examined into the claims of the various religious denominations, and discovered such confusion and contradictions among them, that he turned from all of them in disgust. Then, he adds, he determined to put into practice the advice of St. James, "If any man lack wisdom let him

ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given to him." In the fulfilment of his resolution he declared that he was visited by two glorious personages, who informed him that all the existing sects were in error and had wandered from the truth.

Whoever may have been in the right or in the wrong in the theological controversies which have convulsed the Christian Church, or however harmless or monstrous the errors combatted, it is to be doubted whether the complete history of the infernal spirits could contain any thing more to be deplored or more abominable than has been connected with these religious discords. They have, during the last fifteen centuries, given rise to some of the most dreadful scenes of slaughter that devils ever delighted in. Our limits will not allow us to speak in detail of the bloody Crusades to the Holy Land, where the numbers slain are computed at more than six hundred thousand Moslems, and one hundred thousand christians! And of the savage cruelties of Popish or Mormon wars, where thousands have fallen as if they were brutes, blind to death, judgment and eternal happiness, agitated by infernal passions and covered with blood, to settle the disputes of priests to whom was commiited the care of their souls. But we turn to Protestant countries and churches. We see in Scotland two enlightened, reasoning, patriotic Protestant Christian armies so deluded as mutually to offer prayers to the same benevolent God for success in their attempts to butcher each other. Mobs were raised, worshipping assemblies were attacked, racks, thumb-screws, and instruments of torture were used by these austere fanatics to settle a religious controversy of the most trifling weight. Merely because the Scotch held holidays in disgust, and hated Episcopacy, and the English observed the one and loved the other. Though they were ready to compromise their political differences, their ecclesiastical differences admitted of no compromise, and armies would have met armies for successive generations, and to this day the fields of

Scotland would have remained barren moors and sheep walks drowned with human blood, and her seaports, fishing hamlets to this day, had not the irrevocable doom been pronounced of those religious institutions which they regarded with religious aversion and abhorrence. The feverish discussions of the clergy on the slave question, and the separation between the Methodist Church, South and North, was a prelude to the bloody work now going on in the United States, which is enough to make heaven weep and hell triumph. Both southern and northern pulpits have been filled by sacred orators haranguing the masses and indiscriminately bestowing epithets, invoking heroism, patriotism and piety, until every human and christian feeling is so blended with pride, ambition, hatred and revenge, that it is almost regarded by American christians as a religious merit not to value the lives of their adversaries, and they measure each other more by the standard of worldly honour than by that Christian charity that worketh no ill to our neighbour.

Every man acquainted with the history of Canada must be convinced that the clergy come in for a share of the shame and guilt of the Canadian civil war of 1837. The establishment of rectories was deeply humiliating to a large portion of the Canadian populace. Religious periodicals had diffused a spirit of enquiry in relation to the exclusive right of the Church of England to the advantages of the Clergy Reserve fund. Ministers of the other churches (the Methodist Church not excepted) sought for an increase of funds and repeated government donations. This provoked a quarrel between the mercenary clergy and the aspirants to the same emoluments, and in a degree effected the separation between the Wesleyans and the M. E. Church. This thirst for riches and power seduced many ministers of the Methodist Church to prostrate the dignity and sanctity of their office to interference in politics and elections.* Hand

* Political preachers neither convert souls, nor build up believers in their most holy faith. One may pique himself on his loyalty, the other on his liberality and popular notions of government; but in the sight of

bills were circulated by them, and in the pulpit and at firesides, affectionate requests were made to the people to waive conscience and cast their votes for candidates pledged to support their respective church endowments. This course of conduct disgusted a people distinguished for conscientiousness, and a spirit of religious and civil liberty. They therefore resented this unholy interference of government sycophants who would fawn where thrift will follow fawning, and their zeal being a little embittered by persecution, an appeal was unwisely made to arms. And though men may plead their pure intentions to support the institutions of the Church, and thereby try to dignify their avarice with the specious names of piety and patriotism, yet in their calm retirement they must deplore the effusion of Canadian blood, and secretly, if not openly, confess that that sin and scandal are in part to be imputed to their account.

And when with interested vigilance we examine the statistics of the various churches which demonstrate the expenses attending these ecclesiastical divisions, the question assumes a grave importance, not less political than moral. Our limits will not allow us to notice all the countless facts which we could collect from all directions; but briefly to examine the expenses attending Methodist divisions in Canada. We find in towns, villages and country places, where the Methodist congregations could all conveniently assemble in one house, and attend the ministrations of one clergyman, two, three, and four lean, scattered, and jealous groups, whose points of disagreement could scarce be discovered by a strong polemical microscope, bearing the expense and outlay of erecting, repairing, warming and lighting churches for themselves.

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the great Head of the Church, the first is a sounding brass, the second a tinkling symbal,

> Both stubborn statesmen, both with skill inspired
> To scold or bluster as their cause required.

When preachers of the gospel become parties in party politics, religion mourns, the Church is unedified, and religious disputes agitate even the faithful of the land; such preachers, no matter which side they take, are no longer the messengers of glad tidings, but the seedsmen of confusion and the wasters of the heritage of Christ.—*Dr. Adam Clarke.*

The Methodist Episcopal Church alone, since the separation of 1832, has accumulated Church property amounting to more than two hundred and fifty thousand dollars, the yearly interest of that sum is fifteen thousand dollars, to which we may add ten thousand dollars for incidentals, such as fuel, light, &c., and add still to that amount the seventy-five thousand dollars paid annually to our ministers. And allowing that the Methodist New Connexion, Primitive Methodists, and Bible Christians combined, would in expense equal the Methodist Episcopal Church, there is in Canada an annual waste of wo hundred thousand dollars. We admit that there may be some places occupied by some of these ministers not occupied by others, but there are other places occupied by three and four preachers to counterbalance these solitary cases, and the people would as readily receive the truth from one class of Methodist ministers as another, if there were no other ministers to feed their jealousies. Had we space to examine more particularly into unquestionable evidence, these facts would stand out in bolder relief. Thus on all sides we are supported in the assertion, that two hundred thousand dollars annually is wasted, worse than wasted, by the several Methodist societies in Canada, thereby the personal aggrandisement and ambition of a few of our clergy is maintained at a dear rate. With the same money ministers could be supported and edifices for the worship of God could be erected among the heathen where they are pressingly needed. If there was no demand upon the Church beyond the limits of Canada, its guilt in bearing this useless expense, so contrary to christian economy, might be palliated, but the conviction forces itself upon the mind of every Bible reader that the true ambition and duty of the Church is not to employ her ministers in kindling the embers of controversy by the breath of passion, prejudice and pride, by magnifying the absurd conclusions that might be extorted from the principles or creeds of their fellows, but to plant the standard of the cross in all lands and to evangelize the world. And if ever there was a period in

the world's history when christians should employ all their means and powers it is the present.

The superstitions of Brahminism with its reformation in Buddhism are now shaking from centre to circumference, and their idols, who made not the heavens and the earth, could easily be swept from under these heavens and off this earth by the pure and unpolluted breath of the gospel of Christ, if a united effort were made by the Churches. Mahommedism has lost its power of exciting and interesting its adherents, and the wise and learned of those nations acknowledge that the religion of Christ is superior to that of Mahommed. Romanism, the scourge of earth and spawn of hell, has come to a place where it is impossible to recede—dangerous to stand—ruinous to fall; it is tottering and must crumble into dust. In every direction millions of hands are stretched out, and voices raised, asking for the bread of life and the way to heaven.

And now we ask who can tell the guilt of wasting the means of the Church while these auspicious signals loom up in the distance? And instead of going in at once to possess the land from which God is driving out the enemy from his strongholds, is it not intensely culpable, aye, sinful, to spend the energies of the ministry, and the wealth of the Church, in setting up denominational tenets and dogmas, which are the legitimate offspring of arrogance and folly?

Would it not be more worthy of the profession of the Church to employ its benevolence in maintaining missionaries in heathen lands, than in supporting ministers in establishing doubtful church politics or in eradicating or silencing the adherents of an obnoxious sect? *With the money that is wickedly wasted in Canada*, without the additional liberality which such an enterprise would secure, fifty ministers could be maintained in China, fifty in India, and fifty in Turkey. Let the various branches of the Methodist Church give to the liberal people of Canada unmistakeable evidence that all spiritual hostility should now cease, and that those men who were not needed in Canada would "count not their lives dear,"

and were ready to brave all dangers to establish the standard of the cross in any and every land where the hand of God would open the door, and donations would be found to flow into the treasury of the Church in an astonishing and gloriously overpowering abundance. We weaken our own energies by divisions and discords. Unity of faith produces unity of action. The amounts received at present by our benevolent institutions, fall far short of what they would be if there was a union amongst our contributors. This would give life, activity and interest to our relations to one another, and to the world, and would show the superiority of the christian faith over that selfishness which is nurtured in all false religions. And that these divisions are contrary to the Word of God and sinful is apparent when we consider the following scriptures: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every house divided against itself shall not stand," Mat. xii. 23. "If a kingdom be divided against itself that kingdom cannot stand," Mark iii. 25. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office; so we, being many, are one in Christ and every one members of one another," Rom. xii. 4, 5. "Now we beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment," 1st Cor. i. 10. "For whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? for while one saith, I am of Paul and I of Apollos, are ye not carnal?" 1st Cor. iii. 3, 4. "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace?" Ephes. iv. 3. "There is one body, and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all," Ephes. iv. 4, 6. "Stand fast in one spirit with one mind, striving together for the faith of the gospel," Phil. i. 27. These declarations of

God's Word are so plain that they need no comment, and they clearly prove that the present prevailing systems of denominationalism are repugnant to the revealed will of God.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRISTIAN UNION A PRIVILEGE AND DUTY.

The subject indicated by the heading of this chapter is obviously important, contemplated in whatever light it may be viewed. To every lover of Christ, it must be invested with peculiar interest.

In the discussion of this subject of all-engrossing moment we may encounter various opinions whose errors and differences we will discriminate, as in our opinion, will most contribute a satisfactory discovery of the truth.

Some suppose that Christian union consists in having the same views and opinions on every subject connected with religion, and therefore egotistically separate from all whose religious sentiments might happen to differ from their own.

Now we grant that the Bible teaches, "Be ye all of one mind." But we do not understand that injunction to signify that the impressions received by all minds from all Divine communications should be identical. Is it not rather with spiritual manifestations as it is with natural. A few obvious truths of essential importance stand out so plain that even the way-faring man can discover them while there is ample room for the speculation and conjecture of the highest mind.

We do not wish here to be understood as denying to faith moral character, because upon a man's faith depends the actings of the will and affections, hence without a proper faith, the man is without a due guidance and direction.

But the faith in the gospel, for which we hold such a

fearful responsibility, relates to those first unequivocal truths in reference to which the various Methodist denominations have always substantially agreed, such as the Divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. The right of private judgment in the interpretation of the Scriptures. The unity of the God-head, and Trinity of Persons therein. The utter depravity of man by the fall. The atonement by the incarnation of the Son of God and his mediatorial intercession and reign. The freedom of the human will to choose good or evil. The justification of the sinner by faith alone. The regeneration and sanctification of the soul through the spirit. The immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body. The judgment of eternal life to the righteous, and eternal damnation to the wicked. These essential principles of the gospel stand out so plain, that all see them alike. Still, seen from different stand points, and viewed under varied angles of vision, they produce mental variety. Hence a difference of opinion in non-essential speculative theological questions with essential sameness is a natural result—a privilege and a blessing.

It is however easy to see, that the injunction to be all of one mind refers to something vastly of more importance than exact unity of opinion on every religious subject. The oneness of mind in the exhortation, may exist with great variety of opinion. In Phil. II., 2, we have with the command to be of one mind the explanation "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Now the mind which as o him was a lowly condescending mind, a mind emptied of self and devoted to the glory of God. This lowly condescending mind, filled with zeal for the glory of God and overflowing with benevolence toward man is doubtless the mind which the Bible enjoins. Accordingly the Apostle Paul remarks, Rom. VIII., 9, "Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of His." Supposing all who profess Christianity to have the spirit of Christ, they must be all of one mind, that is, the mind of Christ. Where this

mind is, there must be unity. Color, language, creed, mode of worship, will not, cannot prevent it.

It is asked, why then the prevalence of denominationalism?

Without giving the full answer to this question we reply, that it exists more in depravity than in ignorance. Sin is the essential element in discord. It not only makes man hostile to God, but arms one man against another. It divides, separates, confuses, distresses the whole human family. Pride, strife, revenge, hatred, and avarice, are the roots of bitterness from which spring up all the quarrelling among children, to discord among families, the broils among neighbours, the boxing among bullies, the duelling among modern gentlemen, the wars among nations, and the rancorous contentions which continue to distract the Church. The Gospel dispensation is one of peace. Its great author is called the Prince of peace. His Kingdom is called a Kingdom of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Its grand law is love, and the Scriptures represent the man who hates his brother as a murderer, because that spirit of enmity is in his heart which tends to murder, so wherever and in whomsoever enmity or strife shews itself there is a spirit of murder, which is the spirit of the devil, who is called a murderer. And however covered and sophisticated by figures of speech and softened by Christian titles, it is in direct opposition to the true spirit of Christianity, which is essential to the salvation of the soul. And shall Christians put on the garments of the devil to serve God in, or rather shall we drive out of our hearts the spirit of Christ by acting under the influence of the spirit of the devil. The spirit of Christ which is a spirit of unity, can no more exist with the spirit of the devil, which is a spirit of discord, than light and darkness can exist together, the one must give place to the other. "Give not place to the devil." While we preach a gospel of peace and indulge in or practise discord and disunion, we may deceive ourselves and our fellow-men but we cannot deceive God, who searcheth the heart, or the

devil who knows too well how to suit his temptations to our lusts whence come strife and tumult among men. If we adhere to Christ as the light, the truth, and the way, let us walk as he also walked, and love one another as he also loved us. And Paul exhorts in writing to the Ephesians, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace, from which we learn that if there are differences of opinion existing between Christians, even in important matters, that instead of separating they should strive to heal those differences, which cannot be done by division or schism. Separation invariably magnifies differences of opinion, each of the separated parties naturally augments the importance of his peculiar view of the question, and walking on the stilts of their own pre-conceived superior excellence, the breach necessarily and rapidly widens. How different would be the present state of the Church if disputing Christians had treated each other in the true spirit of humility, forbearance and love, and thereby endeavoured to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

With the foregoing sentiments Mr. Wesley fully agreed; the first division which took place in the Methodist Societies to him were truly painful, and regarded by him as unnecessary and sinful. When asked by Mr. Arcourt whether his people held that a certain number were selected from all eternity, and that these must and shall be saved, and that the rest of mankind must and shall be damned. Mr. Wesley replied, I never asked them whether they held it or not! We proscribe no man for his opinions. Only let him not trouble us by disputing about them. He was reluctant to separate from Mr. Whitfield, and subsequently attempted a reunion with him. He proposed a Conference at London, between himself, his brother Charles, and Mr. John Nelson, on the part of the Armenians, and Mr. Whitfield and such of his friends as he might invite on the part of the Calvinists. That a reunion might be effected he was willing to go to the utmost extent of liberality. In the concessions he made to Mr. Whitfield there appears an approach to

Calvinism. But his liberal propositions were not accepted by the other party, consequently no conference was held. The Christian standard with Mr. Wesley was real piety.

If the heart was changed he required not a change of opinions of any man before he would give him his hand of fellowship. Dr. Adam Clark teaches, that it is dangerous for young converts to go into the company, not only of the ungodly, but of those who are given to doubtful disputations. And it is generally admitted that no set of religious dogmas or opinions were made the boundaries of Christian fellowship and communion during the first three centuries of the Christian Church, during which period greater inroads were made on the kingdom of darkness than in all the fifteen centuries that have since elapsed.

Variety is the law of the universe, and quite accords with general unity. The rays of light are formed of every colour of the rainbow. The various stars all present the splendor of one firmament. The various gases all combine in one atmosphere. Various objects are to be discovered in the landscape. And several features are displayed in the same countenance, yet there is unity in all. And what two minds can look out upon any of these and not receive a few essential truths alike, and a variety of impressions different from each other. Now some suppose because this is the case, and because Paul has said "Let every one be fully satisfied in his own mind." That Christians should make extra liberal concessions and be willing to forego any view of truth, and in their liberality associate with all classes of men even infidels for the sake of visible harmony. But they forget that the spirit that makes men one is one spirit and a spirit of truth. Latitudinarianism cannot produce a unity, because of its diversified elements. Neither can the Holy Spirit produce an indifference to error unless it can be shewn that it is Latitudinarian and equally indifferent to error.

It is strange that men with the Bible in their hands,

cannot see that while the text quoted will allow to the Christian Church variety with unity, that it does not prevent its separation from the world.

To huddle unregenerated men into the Church would not make them one with Christians or one with one another, but would afford them an opportunity to more fiercely bite and devour each other. Having no invisible union with such characters the Church should visibly separate from them. In accordance with this sentiment Paul, in writing to Titus, commands that Christians should "avoid foolish questions, genealogies and contentions and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain;" at the same time he adds "A man that is a heretic after the first and second admonition, reject," and in Thess. ii. 3, 6, we read "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition that he received from us," verses 14 and 15, "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him that he may be ashamed, yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

The plain lessons which we learn from these scriptures are, 1st. That it is not only preposterous and unreasonable but sinful, for Christians to repel each other and visibly separate, because they differ in judgment respecting Church polity, or how some thing should be done, or on some other point of as little significance, while invisibly their unanimity and agreement is complete.

2ndly. That no man has a right to claim the privileges and immunities of Church fellowship without furnishing ample satisfactory proof to its members that God has received him. This God demands, and the Church that accepts of less is recreant to its trust, dishonours God and our holy religion, eternity will reveal the immense injury Churches have entailed upon themselves and upon the Christian world by tolerating the membership of unconverted men.

We come now to consider in what real Christian union

consists. And as we have advanced in the contemplation of the theme every step becomes more and still more important and interesting. No longer is the reader a mere querist but a serious and concerned party. Oh may we be led to right conclusions, that we may put up our sword of controversy.

Christian union is not an abstract principle as some have supposed, not a mere cessation of quarrelling, and formally bidding each other God speed, but a living, holy active, operative, indwelling principle in the soul of man, a divine regenerating and soul-transforming change, embracing a union with God the fountain of all happiness, life and felicity. When this union is effected between God and the soul, the soul knows but one object and that is God, and has but one feeling, and that is love. All natural and unsanctified desires, arms and purposes being alienated, the conversation is with God, and after God's manner, and not after the manner of men. There is a constant flowing and reflowing of affection, love going up and love coming down. Then the soul can say emphatically, his left hand is under my head and his right hand doth embrace me. He brought me to his banqueting house and his banner over me is love. Selfwill, the great evil of fallen nature, being eradicated and subdued the soul forms a union with the Divine will by a subjection of the human will. Then the human will ceasing from all its rebellion, constantly harmonizes with God's purposes. The Spirit of God producing in the heart, God-like, heavenly, forgiving and benevolent dispositions—love to God and love to man, and an utter detestation of all strife, variance and contention—a desire to promote mutual good will among men, especially among the children of God, becouse he is united to God and transformed to the Divine nature, and he that is joined to God is one spirit, 1st Cor. vi., 17, "Hence all who are one with God, are one with one another: and all who are at peace with God are at peace with one another.

The Spirit of God effects this work, and where it

dwells among Christians there cannot but be union. They having all come as living stones to the living and chief corner stone, and comparted into an habitation for God through the Spirit, all such are one in Christ Jesus. And the fundamental argument for Christians being one, is the oneness of the Spirit who dwells everywhere in them they having been made to drink into one spirit. Hence the Apostle ye are into one body. The Spirit of God alone can knit the hearts and minds of men together unto permanent peace and love.

Of this the Prophet speaks distinctly. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his veins. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. They shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

And Jesus especially designed to accomplish this that is to turn the people to the Lord their God, and at the same time to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, to make them friends to God and friends to one another.

The whole scriptures propounds a redundancy of powerful arguments in favour of this idea of Christian peace and union, which must appear evident to any man who seriously considers the following passages. That they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me, John xvii., 22, 23. As we have many members in our body, and all the members have not the same office, so we being many are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another, Rom. xii., 4, 5. For as the body is one and hath many members in one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and

have been all made to drink into one spirit even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another even as God, for Christ's sake forgave you, for ye are members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones, Ephesians, iv., 3, 6, 16, and v., 30. The plain doctrine taught by these scriptures is, 1stly, One body, 2ndly, One spirit—the same Holy spirit that quickens all saints, and is to the whole what the natural sun is to the solar system, the centre, the light, and the life. But, notwithstanding all that the revelation of the great will of the Eternal expresses in relation to the oneness of God's people and their unity as a body, or on schisms, and divisions, it is humiliating to confess that the grievous and sinful schisms which are found in the Church in this enlightened day, are popular, and are pleaded for by many as necessary. But with such a religion we cannot see what is to prevent the union of all Christians. Allowing that creed of our brethren more erroneous than our own, does it make paramount the vital truth we have been considering. Let the question do they breathe the spiritual life of love? be answered in the affirmative, and we cannot refuse to love what God has made lovely. If despite the errors in the tenets or notions of Church polity of our sister Churches, God has regenerated their members, shall we in the strait-jacket of sectarianism say, "Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." The truth is, that all who have the Holy spirit dwelling in them, have a bond of union stronger than the walls round about Jerusalem. And having the invisible why not the visible union. Having a spiritual union, why weaken by sectarian technicalities and denominational jealousies.

The same sentiments are eloquently expressed in the

following paragraph from the pen of that strong thinker *Lord Bacon:*

"Religion being the chief bond of human society, it is a happy thing when itself is well contained within the true bond of unity. The quarrels and divisions about religion were evils unknown to the heathen. The reason was, because the religion of the heathen consisted rather in rites and ceremonies, than in any constant belief; for you may imagine what kind of faith theirs was, when the chief doctors and fathers of their church were the poets. But the true God hath this attribute, that he is a jealous God; and therefore his worship and religion will endure no mixture nor partner. We shall therefore speak a few words concerning the unity of the church; what are the fruits thereof; what the bonds; and what the means.

"The fruits of unity (next unto the well-pleasing of God, which is all in all) are two; the one towards those that are without the Church, the other towards those that are within. For the former, it is certain that heresies and schisms are of all others the greatest scandals, yea, more than corruption of manners; for as in the natural body a wound or solution of continuity is worse than a corrupt humor, so in the spiritual: so that nothing doth so much keep men out of the church, and drive men out of the church, as breach of unity; and, therefore, whensoever it cometh to that pass that one saith, 'Ecce in deserto'—['Lo! it is in the desert'] another saith, 'Ecce in penetralibus'—['Lo! it is in the sanctuary']—that is, when some men seek Christ in the conventicles of heretics, and others in an outward face of a church, that voice had need continually to sound in men's ears, 'Nolite exire' ['Go not out.'] The Doctor of the Gentiles (the propriety of whose vocation drew him to have a special care of those without) saith, 'If a heathen come in, and hear you speak with several tongues, will he not say that you are mad?' and certainly, it is little better: when atheists and profane persons do hear of so many discordant and contrary opinions in religion, it doth avert them from the church, and maketh them 'to sit down in the chair of the scorners.' It is but a light thing to be vouched in so serious a matter, but yet it expresseth well the deformity. There is a master of scoffing, that in his catalogue of books of a feigned library, sets down this title of a book, 'The Morris-Dance of Heretics:' for, indeed, every sect of them hath a diverse posture, or

cringe, by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings and depraved politics, who are apt to condemn holy things.

"As for the fruit towards those that are within, it is peace, which containeth infinite blessings; it establisheth faith; it kindleth charity; the outward peace of the church distilleth into peace of conscience, and it turneth the labours of writing and reading controversies into treatises of mortification and devotion.

"Concerning the bonds of unity, the true placing of them importeth exceedingly. There appear to be two extremes; for to certain zealots all speech of pacification is odious. 'Is it peace, Jehu?' 'What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me.' Peace is not the matter, but following and party. Contrariwise, certain Laodiceans and lukewarm persons think they may accommodate points of religion by middle ways, and taking part of both, and witty reconcilements, as if they would make an arbitrament between God and man. Both these extremes are to be avoided; which will be done if the league of Christians, penned by our Saviour himself, were in the two cross clauses thereof soundly and plainly expounded: 'He that is not with us is against us;' and again, 'He that is not against us is with us;' that is, if the points fundamental, and of substance in religion, were truly discerned and distinguished from points not merely of faith, but of opinion, order, or good intention. This is a thing may seem to many a matter trivial, and done already; but if it were done less partially, it would be embraced more generally.

"Of this I may give only this advice, according to my small model. Men ought to take heed of rending God's church by two kinds of controversies; the one is, when the matter of the point controverted is too small and light, not worth the heat and strife about it, kindled only by contradiction; for, as it is noted by one of the fathers, Christ's coat indeed had no seam, but the church's vesture was of divers colours; whereupon he saith, 'in veste varietas sit, scissura non sit'—['In the garment let there be variety, but no rent'] they be two things, unity and uniformity; the other is, when the matter of the point controverted is great, but it is driven to an over-great subtilty and obscurity, so that it becometh a thing rather ingenious than substantial. A man that is of judgment and understanding shall sometimes hear ignorant men differ, and know well within himself, that those which

so differ mean one thing and yet they themselves would never agree: and if it come so to pass in that distance of judgment which is between man and man, shall we not think that God above, that knows the heart, doth not discern that frail men, in some of their contradictions, intend the same thing and accepted of both? The nature of such controversies is excellently expressed by St. Paul, in the warning and precept that he giveth concerning the same, 'Devita profanas vocum novitates, et oppositiones falsi nominis scientiæ'—['Avoid profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called.'] Men create oppositions which are not, and put them into new terms so fixed; as whereas the meaning ought to govern the term, the term in effect governeth the meaning. There be also two false peaces, or unities: the one, when the peace is grounded but upon an implicit ignorance; for all colours will agree in the dark: the other, when it is pieced up upon a direct admission of contraries in fundamental points; for truth and falsehood in such things are like the iron and clay in the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image—they may cleave, but they will not incorporate.

"Concerning the means of procuring unity, men must beware that, in the procuring or muniting of religious unity, they do not dissolve and deface the laws of charity and of human society. There be two swords amongst Christians, the spiritual and the temporal, and both have their due office and place in the maintenance of religion; but we may not take up the third sword, which is Mahomet's sword, or like unto it—that is, to propagate religion by wars, or by sanguinary persecutions to force consciences—except it be in cases of overt scandal, blasphemy, or intermixture of practice against the state; much less to nourish seditions; to authorize conspiracies and rebellions; to put the sword into the people's hands, and the like, tending to the subversion of all government, which is the ordinance of God; for this is but to dash the first table against the second; and so to consider men as Christians, as we forgot that they are men. Lucretius, the poet, when he beheld the act of Agamemnon, that could endure the sacrificing of his own daughter, exclaimed:

> "'Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.'
> "['So many evils could religion cause.']

What would he have said, if he had known of the mas-

sacre in France, or the powder treason of England? He would have been seven times more epicure and atheist then he was; for as the temporal sword is to be drawn with great circumspection in cases of religion, so it is a thing monstrous to put it into the hands of the common people; let that be left unto the anabaptists, and other furies. It was great blasphemy when the devil said, 'I will ascend and be like the highest;' but it is greater blasphemy to personate God, and bring him in saying, 'I will descend, and be like the prince of darkness:' and what is it better, to make the cause of religion to descend to the cruel and execrable actions of murdering princes, butchery of people, and subversion of states and governments? Surely this is to bring down the Holy Ghost, instead of the likeness of a dove, in the shape of a vulture or raven; and to set out of the bark of a Christian church, a flag of a bark of pirates and assassins: therefore it is most necessary that the church, by doctrine and decree, princes by their sword, and all learnings, both Christian and moral, as by their mercury rod to damn and send to hell forever, those facts and opinions tending to the support of the same, as hath been already in good part done. Surely in councils concerning religion, that counsel of the apostle would be prefixed, 'Ira hominis non implet justitiam Dei'—['Man's anger satisfies not the justice of God]'; and it was a notable observation of a wise father, and no less ingenuously confessed, that those which held and persuaded pressure of consciences, were commonly interested therein themselves for their own ends."

In perfect accordance with the foregoing views, we quote the following from Gurnall, who wrote about two hundred years ago:

"Now the Gospel is a Gospel of Peace if taken in this notion also, which we shall briefly speak to, viz.; The Gospel and only the Gospel can knit the hearts and minds of men together, in a solid peace and love, this next to reconciling us to God, is especially designed by Christ in the Gospel, and truly without this the saint's happiness would be sadly defective, except God should make a Heaven for every one to live by himself in. John Baptist's ministry was the preface to the Gospel divided into these two heads,—1. To turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God; and 2. To turn the hearts of

the fathers to the children, to make them friends with God and one another; this is its natural effect, to unite and render the hearts of men and women in love and peace; this is the strange metamorphosis of which the prophet speaks, Isa. xi. v. 8., 'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, &c.' And how is all this, see v. 9, 'for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.' Indeed it is in the dark that men fight and draw upon one another in wrath and fury; if gospel light comes savingly in, the sword will soon be put up, the sweet spirit of love will not suffer these doings where he dwells, and so peculiar is this blessing to the Gospel, that Christ has made it the badge by which they should not only know one another, but should be known by strangers from all others, John xiii. 35. If we would see the effects of this love, let us gaze with admiration on the display of it in the case of those who first embraced and professed the Gospel in sincerity, and then glance by the eye of faith at this beauteous flower full blown and diffusing its celestial fragrance in an unchanging atmosphere of love. Among the primitive saints how sweet was the harmony and peace; those who had been enemies now living and loved as if each one's heart had forsaken its former abode to creep into his brother's bosom; they parted with their estates to keep their love entire, with the bread out of their own mouths to feed their brethren in want—were more merry in emptying their bags in charity than in filling them with gain—and did eat their bread with gladness and singleness of heart; and if we look at the state of things in heaven when the hearts of saints shall be fully *Gospelized* and all the promises be accomplished, then above all the peace of the Gospel will appear; here it is put out and in like a budding flower in the spring; if a warm day opens it, a cold one follows, and it's soon closed again. The silence in this lower heaven is but for the space of half an hour, Rev. viii. 1.

"But this Gospel propounds powerful arguments for peace and unity such as are found no where else; cords of love that were never wove in nature's loom, being all supernatural and of divine revelation, Eph. iv. 3; and how does the Apostle persuade them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: First, one body, such a one as philosophy treats not of; again, one spirit, the same holy Spirit which quickens all true saints, and is to the whole number of them what the soul is to the whole

man, and is as it were a prodigious violence to the law of Nature, for the members by intestine war among themselves to drive the soul out of the body, so much more is it for Christians to force the Holy Spirit from them by their contentions; and how can they open a wider door for him to depart. But again he presseth unity from the one hope of our calling; there is a day coming when we shall meet lovingly in heaven and sit at one feast without grudging what lies on another's trencher. Full fruition of God shall be the feast and peace and love the sweet music that shall for ever accompany and augment the harmony and the blessedness."

With the subjoined from the able pen of John Howe, we dismiss this chapter, feeling that any farther argument to prove the positiveness of the invisible connexion and oneness of all Christians, and the necessity of visible union would be a mockery, a taunt, to aggravate the shame of those who perpetuate sectarianism:

"That it is the work of God's own Spirit to effect such a union, and consequently that when it shall be generally poured forth such a union must be realized; this is typically represented by the precious ointment shed upon Aaron, diffused upon his garments; referring doubtless to the anointing of the Holy Ghost eminently, and in the first place upon our Lord Jesus Christ, and thence diffused to all the members of his Body—the Church.. Hence also the unity in what degree soever it doth obtain is called the unity of the Spirit; and Christians also because of its unspeakable importance, and the dangers attending the breach of it are admonished to endeavour to maintain it in the bond of peace. That also which is the subject of such a union is the habitation of the indwelling Spirit, which implies that it hath great influence on this union, that where it dwells among all living Christians there cannot but be some union in the main and principal things, they having all come as lively stones unto the living and chief corner stone, and compacted into an habitation of God through the Spirit; all such are of the Church of God, and therefore should be recognized as such, for we are all one in Christ Jesus: and further, the very cause of this union amongst Christians, so far as it does prevail, is the oneness of the Spirit who dwells everywhere in them all for this very end and purpose; for there is one Body and one

Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. The reason why the members of the Body, though many are yet but one Body, is, because by the one Spirit they are all baptized into one Body, and have been made to drink into one Spirit; as if it had been said you are so little one upon any other account, that only as one Spirit hath diffused itself among you and cemented you together will this desirable object be obtained—without this the Body of Christ would be no more one than a rope of sand; there would be no cohesion of parts; for the parts of a man's body, as the parts of the Church, are a continual flux; there is a continual wear and waste, a constant succession of new parts to make up for those which have passed away, and yet there is but one man still, because he hath still but one soul. So also is the Church one and the same thing because it hath one Spirit; and as it is the office and business of the soul to animate and enliven the body in its several parts, which it can only do by retaining them in union with itself and one another; the case is manifestly so here as the members of the body share its privileges in community, as for instance that of peace, and the communion which it includes. So saith the Apostle, ye are called into one Body; or speaking of the peace of God he says—to which also ye are called in one Body, the Spirit doth not animate, but as it unites this plainly argues it to be the work of the Spirit to effect and maintain this union; you know the rest of the world are divided about blessedness, or wherein the chief good consists; there are no less than two hundred and eighty-three opinions among the heathens about it now, how came all sincere Christians to agree in this—to hope for blessedness all in one thing in that state of life and glory that is hereafter to be enjoyed, and that they all, in all times of the world, should have met in the same one hope of their calling; all this must be owing to one cause—must proceed from one principle; they have all one faith, are all of one religion; as to its essentials all come under one title, all give up and denote themselves under the bond of God's covenant—are the children of God by faith, and the one God and Father of all; in this all sincere Christians meet, and how come they so to meet? By chance? No, certainly not. But by one designing cause that worked them all one way. How else should such numbers agree in one thing, and design to be all for God in a world that is revolted and apostatized from him, it must be the result of one com-

mon unitive principle, the effect of his gracious influences, who is the Spirit of holiness, peace, and love; our divisions are indeed a sad indication that the Spirit is in a great measure withdrawn, and that but little of his work is to be seen among Christians in our day in comparison to what has been and what may be hoped for in time to come, to which we may revert more particularly hereafter.

"There are two further inquiries deserving special notice relating to this important subject.

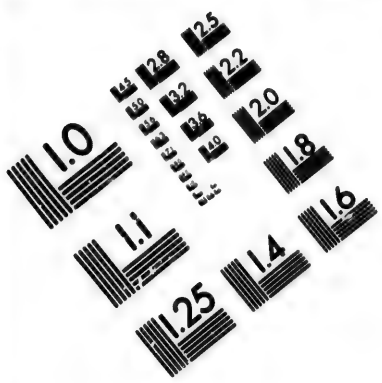
"1st, What kind of union this shall be which we may expect the Spirit poured forth to accomplish.

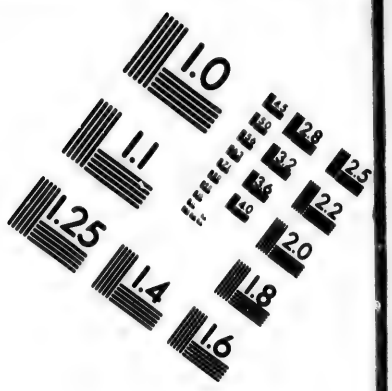
"2nd, In what way we may expect it to be accomplished. As to its nature, it will be such a union as shall combine within itself the duty, and much of the happiness of the Church: such a one as will contribute much to its felicity; such as will beautifully illustrate the faithfulness of God to His promise, and the Church's obedience to her Divine Lord. But as we neither expect the Church of God on earth to be perfectly sinless or perfectly happy, we cannot expect this union to be perfect. Nor should it be thought requisite, in order to this union, that the spirit should be, as thus poured out, an infallible spirit, thus as some have thought necessary, conferring on men a Spirit of Infalibility, in order to union, whilst the question as to the seat of it would still remain unsettled. Besides, as a union in holiness is as necessary for the Church of God, as in truth we might as reasonably expect an impeccable as an infallible spirit, the pretenders to which have been so notoriously vicious and vile that we may justly say that if such a spirit had indeed existed among them it was unfitly lodged in the midst of such horrid impurities, and did no more become them than a jewel of gold in a swine's snout. But we pass on to inquire,—1st, what a union we are not to expect,—2nd, what union actually exists among all living Christians,—3rd, what union are we further to look and hope for. 1st, We are not to expect that all shall agree in the same measure of knowledge, and, as the consequence, an identity of apprehen ion. Every man that thinks differently from another, does so either truly or falsely; and on which side soever the error lies, there lies so much ignorance; and whilst here we all know but in part. Nor can we reasonably expect that all will attain to the same pitch in holiness, no one more spiritual and heavenly than another; nor will all feel the same sensations of di-

vine pleasure, the same motions of holy and spiritual affections, delight and joy, much of which may depend on bodily temperament, in which it is obviously in vain to seek for uniformity, as it is also in rank, order, station, and work—where, if indeed it existed, it would not be the perfection of union, but the union of imperfection. Such a union then, we are not to expect. But, 2nd. Certainly there is among all sincere and living Christians such a union as that whereof I am now discoursing—a union n those great and substantial things referred to in Eph. 4: 3, 4, which, having been noticed before, may be briefly summed up as follows: Christ is the head of his body, the Church: all the members of this body do from him partake of that one and the same spirit; it is He who has opened heaven to them—who has brought life and immortality to light before their eyes; they are called by him in that one hope of their calling. He is the Mediator of that covenant of redemption which comprehends them all. It is He that reduces and restores and re-unites them to God, and sets all things right between Him and them; herein is the sum of their unions. Great has been the controversy about the distinction of the essentials and extra essentials of Christianity. But let men cavil as long as they will, it would manifestly be a most absurd thing to deny the distinction, for to such a one I would say, what part of the distinction would you deny,—that Christianity has essential parts or that it has extra essential parts? If it has no essential parts, it has no being, or certainly that is nothing to which nothing is essential, and to say that there are no extra essential parts is to say that a man cannot be a Christian unless he knows every thing of truth, and punctually performs every thing of duty, whether he understands it or not; which is like saying he could not be a Christian unless he certainly did know the meaning of the number six hundred and sixty-six, and a thousand difficult passages of scripture besides. This then is in effect to deny the existence both of Christianity itself and of Christians themselves; for it must be obvious that if the system has nothing essential it has no being, and also that no Christian knows and does every thing that belongs to the Christian religion. The Apostle gives us a summary of Christian doctrine and practice, 1 Cor. viii., 6:—"To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, and we by him,"—where we have the great object upon which religion ter-

minates—God considered as the end and Christ the Mediator, the way to that end, whilst in Mat. xxviii., 19, we are pointed to the Father as the end, the Son as the way, and the Spirit as the great principle of life and energy, moving souls towards that end through that way. In these things all sincere Christians unite and agree. Yet, 3rdly, it should be lamented that with this union, there is still much disunion—such as is highly dishonourable to God, scandalous before the world, and a most grievous obstacle to the happiness and prosperity of the Church, as might be the case in a living man,—the soul and body still united, and the several parts, but all in a most languishing condition, and nigh unto death, and it may be, one member falling foul of another. The union we should expect, pray for, and aim at, is that for which the Lord Jesus so earnestly prayed, and it is also promised in Jer. xxxii. and xxxix; to effect which there must be a pouring forth of the Spirit copiously, to subdue and attemper the souls of men to the mind of Christ, raising their minds to higher and nobler aims in seeking to know and do his will, so that self-will and the mere love of party be not as it now is among professing Christians, the common rule; but each aiming to walk in the steps and imbibe the spirit that was in the Lord Jesus, endeavoring to walk by the same rule, and mind the same things, may be assured that if any thing they be otherwise minded (or still deficient, which is here implied) God shall reveal even this unto them.

"We proceed now to inquire in what way the Spirit of God poured forth, may be expected to effect this union, and there is no doubt but it will be by the same means by which religion itself shall be revived and recovered, of which we have so largely spoken, for that which makes the Christian Church a living Church, will make it *One*, that is, in that higher and more eminent degree, whereof we have been speaking. It is but one and the same thing, or is done by the same operation, the making the Church more holy and the making one, that which brings Christians nearer to God, and Christ will infallibly and at once bring them nearer to each other, whensoever the Spirit of God poured forth shall make men agree in having the Lord for their God, saying, this God is our God for ever and ever. When men shall become more sincere and thorough Christians, they will certainly find that the things in which they are agreed are far more momentous than any about which they may differ, to





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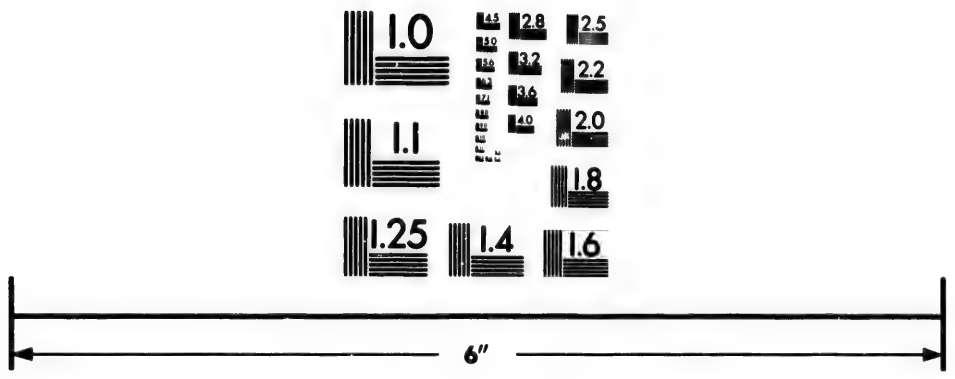

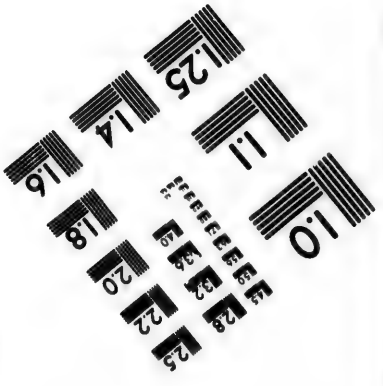

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this effect is the promise in Jer. xxxii., 38–39. "They shall be my people, and I will be their God; and I will give them one heart and one way." We are told that God is Light, and also, that he is Love. Were the image of God in these two things more generally and vividly impressed upon men, this would do the whole business, this would make them all one. How blessed then would the union of Christians be. The effect of such a pouring out of the Spirit it may be expected will be—1st, an increase of light and knowledge among Christians generally, as to things necessary to union; 2nd, greater measures of grace, rendering them more patient and forbearing towards each other; and 1st, By an increase of light and knowledge, I mean such as lies in the next immediate tendency to holiness, the knowledge of the truth which is after godliness, and which doth attemper and dispose the minds of men for the reception of truth as sanctifying, truth as it is the transformative of the soul into a holy and godly frame; otherwise there wants the cement that should hold hearts together. Whenever the Spirit of God doth that blessed work in the world, to revive true Religion, it will unite Christians, by curing the maladies and distempers of mind, which prevent them from receiving sound gospel knowledge; for if this be not done it will be impossible there should be union, unless men should agree only in being diseased, or which would be equally absurd, agree all to be in one disease, which surely would be a most unhappy union. But, when the Spirit of the living God, shall create the Christian world a region of light, then shall be realized the happy union of which we have spoken. 3rd, By making Christians more patient of dissent from one another in less necessary things, for then there will be a greater ability to distinguish between truths that are of Scripture revelation and those that are not, and to judge more correctly of their relative importance; and also, among revealed truths men will be enabled to distinguish between those which are more or less necessary, and being also more spiritual, they will be more apt to be taken up with the great things of religion. Be more holy, less opinionative and humoursome, and have less of the knowledge that puffeth up. Then Christians will maintain a reverential subjection to God's own prescribed rules of, and terms of Christian communion, not daring to make terms, limiting the communion of Christians, as such, which Christ never authorized and will never own, under this devout subjection,

to the authority of Christ, and influenced by a due regard to his new commandment, Christians will extend their communion to all those to whom he extends his, for this is the import of the Apostle's words, Romans xiv., 1, 10, and also chap. xv., 7; here is a principle more broad and solid, and better adapted as a basis of Christian communion, and as a specific to cure the diseases of the Church than any squaring or adjusting of the external forms whilst the internal conformity of the minds of its members to the mind of Christ in meekness, gentleness, and love, are lost sight of."

CHAPTER V.

WHEN CHURCH TENETS SHOULD BE CHANGED.

The plain doctrine of the last chapter, that all men who are united to God in love, are united to one another in sympathy, which strictly signifies harmony, or union of feeling. There must be two or more persons who are the subjects of this common feeling, and some common object, in reference to which this common feeling is exercised, hence the commandment "That he who loveth God, love his brother also, for love is of God, and every one that loveth, is born of God and knoweth God," and, "If any man say he loveth God and hateth his brother, he is a liar," 1st John iv., 7, 20.

Love then is the basis of all true religion. If Christians then truly love one another, it follows as a necessary result that they harmonize with every thing which concerns each others interest. This doctrine leads us to believe that our common ethnology would naturally produce a removal of all those denominational badges and sectarian lines which prevent an amalgamation of those between whose characteristic peculiarities there is so complete an assimilation, and Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites would meet together with one accord in the same temple, to declare the wonderful works of God.

Prudence will dictate that Church tenets long established, should not be changed or discarded for light and trivial causes. But when it is made evident that such tenets have divided the Church into sects, some things cut off separated some things incompatible with the body of Christ, and the prayer of our Redeemer, that all his people should be one, and productive of infidelity, and

unauthorized by God's word, it is right, it becomes duty to change or give up such tenets.

And that such is the nature and tendency of the dogmas that now divide the Church of Christ has been abundantly proved in the preceding pages by God's word and the history of the Church to which we have appealed.

There are some aspects of the subject now before us which cannot be fully appreciated without bearing in mind the perpetual harmony of the requirements and prohibitions of God. What he now requires and prohibits he required and prohibited in the past, and will in the future. And every thing which is intermediate, corresponds with the beginning and the end. And he cannot be discordant with himself, and we read, God is love, Jehovah is the only supreme unoriginated being, every thing else is a dependency. From him all things come, and to him, as the originator and governor, all things are in subjection. Prior to any human compact or law, there was a compact and law, which is the Divine law of love, existing in the universe, which cannot be dissolved or altered by any human legislation either ecclesiastical or civil. Man, as a created being, can take no other position but that of a recipient, and in that position he is bound to submit to the supreme guidance. His right we humbly conceive to be the privileges bestowed on him in his probationary state by the moral governor of the universe. But as a God of Love, to be consistent with himself, can only give man the privilege of doing what is consistent with that principle. And no human jurisdiction, either civil or ecclesiastical, has a right to interfere with any preclusion or obligation enjoined.

Privileges bestowed implies gifts. The rights of man are the gifts of the God of Love, and designed by him to answer a purpose worthy of himself. To treat those privileges with indifference, is to undervalue them, to undervalue the gift, is to undervalue the giver and to treat him with a degree of contempt, and to prevent man from accomplishing the noble purposes for which he was de-

signed by his Creator, and to violate his moral obligations to the Most High, who, as righteous Judge, will call him to an account and reward him according to the deeds done in the body. The giver of every good and perfect gift has made man free and independent in his individual capacity to enjoy life, liberty, property, private judgment and happiness, and the exercise of that freedom is enjoined upon him. Consequently one man is not accountable for another. But in his associated capacity he is bound by his Creator to yield conformity to the moral law of love, which would prohibit any course of conduct hurtful to society, and requires what would promote the happiness of others. Hence we conclude that all law, civil or ecclesiastical, enacted by man, ought in justice to be made in conformity to this pre-existing moral law of love otherwise it encroaches on the rights of others and causes confusion in society by creating animosities, strife, and contentions among the lapsed and fallen family of Adam. God made all nations of one blood to dwell upon the face of the earth, their distinctions of colour, language, and manners notwithstanding; yet, the cold, cheerless spirit of selfishness, in ambitious princes, has disturbed the general harmony of nations, by the enactment of laws which produced a competition of interest, thence provoking pride, bitterness, hatred, and enmity. Enmity, which is continually bursting in storms of vengeance upon each other, laying cities in ashes and covering fields with human blood, condemning men to tortures and despotically enslaving the offspring of God. In this view of the pernicious laws of rulers, and practice of the inhabitants of the earth, deep gloom settles upon the societies of men, and apparantly a long melancholy nigh over spreads the world, and we despairingly ask, shall the fetters ever fall from the hands of the bound, shall liberty and joy ever enter the poor man's dwelling and the mother cease to weep for her children, torn from her arms to swell the hosts of a tyrant and be "sacrificed to the blood-thirsty Moloch of war in the valley of slaughter." But while we ask these questions we hear voices from the upper

sanctuary which break the silence of night—"Glory to God on high, peace on earth, and good will to all men." The gloom of this moral night is dispelled by the glorious rays of the sun of Righteousness, and a bright prospect, and animating consolation is revealed to the wretched sons of Adam.

By this light a remedy is discovered equal to the disorder.—The great truth that all men are brethren, and that God, as the great Parent of the family, confers his favours on the whole; causing his sun to rise and his rain to descend equally on the just and unjust, and that man should imitate this universal benevolence by love-like universal. In the exercise of this divine principle he should suffer injury without resistance, and return good for evil, blessing for cursing—forgiving those who trespass against him, as he wishes his father who is in heaven to forgive him. And that law, civil or ecclesiastical, which is not based on this Divine universal law of love, is impious and should be repealed.

And those ecclesiastical authorities who establish dogmas or tenets, which are calculated to produce a competition of interest or separation between the true children of God, dry up the fountains of greatness in the human soul. They disolve all the obligations and charities of life, and extinguish the majesty and sanctity of the religion of Jesus Christ. They raise a pestilential vapour, more appalling to mankind than the arms of the usurper. Their guilt is not the common guilt of tyrants, against the wealth or liberties of men, but against all that man holds dear, sacred and holy; not only against the bodies but against the souls of the enslaved, not only against the oppressed but against the altar at which wretched human nature weeps and is comforted, and wrings again the wild but thrilling cry from heaven "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." One of the peculiarities of the children of God, is to follow their great example Jesus, in extending benevolence to all beings. They have been made partakers of the Divine nature, namely, love. The law of love, which is the eternal rule of moral rectitude and right, is written on their hearts. This law in its

mighty power works out the problem of universal harmony, constituting a bond of union reaching all, encircling all, beautifying all, reviving faith, awakening hope, and unfettering charity, which will hasten the day "when all nations shall rest in secure habitation and in quiet resting-places, and when there shall be wars no more," and, "they shall be my people and I will be their God. And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them and their children after them." We bend in thankfulness before the promises of our faith, and with warm emotion to the God who gave them, and pray "Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven."

It must be admitted that if any particular set of tenets or mode of Church government is of Divine prescription, it cannot be determined by the word of God. Hence we conclude that the government of the Church is left to its own discretion, and the exigencies of attending circumstances. But any rule, law, or organization, which in the least is calculated to narrow down the benevolence of Christians to a select few, is egregiously inconsistent with the Divine law of love, as revealed in the sacred scriptures, and who that has seeing eyes can fail to discover that the dividing the Christian Church into sects, by professions of faith, and exact external ceremonies, not essential to salvation, but fabricated by designing men and based upon priestly pride and usurpation, will produce mortifying uncharitableness towards all who dissent from them. The adherents of each particular creed being convinced of the orthodoxy of their own dogmas and the Divine right of their Church polity, they regard it important for others to embrace precisely their opinions and to support their associations in order to be Christians, worthy of their fellowship and sympathy, otherwise they esteem them as strangers and aliens, however distinguished by piety, ability, and usefulness. The doctrine that these external ceremonies and usages, which have created controversies are of God, represents the Divine Government to be at variance with itself, confounds good and evil, discord and harmony, strife and

peace, enmity and love together, and God as the indiscriminate author of all. A doctrine involving such consequences and contradictions, however excusable in the dark ages is a disgrace to the nineteenth century, the ridicule of sensible men, and needs few remarks, as it contains its own refutation within itself.

In these opinions we are sustained by many eminent authorities of various sections of the Christian Church. Mr. Watson, in his theological Institutes, Vol. 2, p. 585, quotes the following language of Bishop Tomline, "No Church can exist without some government; but though there must be rules and orders, for the proper discharge of the offices of public worship, though there must be fixed regulations concerning the appointment of ministers and though a subordination is expedient in the highest degree, yet it does not follow that all these things must be precisely the same in every Christian country; they vary with the other varying circumstances of human society, with the extent of a country, the manners of its inhabitants, the nature of its civil government, and many other peculiarities which might be specified. As it has not pleased our Almighty Father to prescribe any particular form of civil government for the security of temporal comforts to his rational creatures, so neither has he prescribed any particular form of ecclesiastical polity as absolutely necessary to the attainment of eternal happiness." In keeping with the foregoing, Dr. Campbell forcibly remarks "That no form of polity can plead such an exclusive charter as that phrase, [*Divine Right*] in its present acceptation, is understood to imply; that the claim is clearly the offspring of sectarian bigotry and ignorance. This we may say with freedom, that if any particular form of polity had been essential to the Church it would have been laid down in a different manner in the sacred book.

Again; Dr. Bangs says: "No specific form of Church government is prescribed in scripture, and therefore it is left to the discretion of the Church to regulate these matters as the exigencies of time, and place, and circum-

stance, shall dictate to be most expedient, and likely to accomplish the greatest amount of good; always avoiding any and every thing which God has prohibited. Mr. Wesley, a very prudent person, and one careful to avoid innovation, and one not ignorant of the doctrines of the Bible or afraid to defend them, remarks, "This opinion which I once zealously espoused, I have been heartily ashamed of, ever since I read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicum* I think he has unanswerably proved that neither Christ nor his Apostles prescribe any particular form of Church Government." The doctrine thus supported by good authority, namely, that no particular forms of Church, government or dogmas, is prescribed in the scriptures, but are left to the discretion of the Church and the exigencies of circumstances, must be obvious to all who are familiar with the New Testament.

The doctrine of Divine Right, either of civil or ecclesiastical jurisdiction, to interfere, either to restrain or tolerate Church polities, the exercise of devotion, or the performance of any moral duty, either to God or man is contrary to the germs of Christianity and perniciously retards its progress. What the Divine right of both civil and ecclesiastical rulers and subjects is, H. B. Bascom, D.D., of the M. E. Church, beautifully sets forth in the following summary of human rights explanatory of the reasons and principles of government:

"*Article* 1*st.* God, as the common Father of mankind, has created all men free and equal, and the proper equality and social freedom of the great brotherhood of the human race, in view of the gifts and grants of the Creator, are to be inferred from all his dispensations to men. Every man by the charter of his creation, is the equal of his contemporaries;—the essential rights of every generation are the same. Man, as the child of God's creation, continues man immutably, under all circumstances;—and the rights of ancestry are those of posterity. Man has claims, which it becomes his duty to assert, in right of his existence, such as the infeasible right of thinking and acting for himself, when thought and action do not infringe the right of another, as they never will, when truth and justice are made the basis of human intercourse. These

rights, common to the great family of man, cannot be abolished by concession, statute, precedent, or positive institution; and when wrested or withheld from the multitude of mankind, by their rulers, may be reclaimed by the people, whenever they see proper to do it.

"*Art. 2nd.* Man was created for society, his natural rights are adapted to the social state, and under every form of society, constitute properly, the foundation of his civil rights. When man becomes a member of civil society, he submits to a modification of some of his natural rights, but he never does, he never can, relinquish them. He concedes the exercise of these rights, for his own and the general good, but does not, cannot, cast them off. His rights receive a new direction, but do not terminate; and that government which deprives man of rights, justy claimed in virtue of his creation, and interwoven with the constitution of his nature, and the interests of society, denies to him the gifts of his Creator, and must be unjust. God can be the author of no government, contravening the wisdom of his arrangements, in the creation of men.

"*Art. 3rd.* In every community there is a power, which receives the denomination of sovreignty, a power not subject to control, and that controls all subordinate powers in the government. Now, whether this power be in the hands of many or a few, it is indubitably certain, that those members only of the community are free, in whom the sovereign power resides. The power of a community is essential to its freedom, and if this power be confined to a few, freedom is necessarily confined to the same number. All just goverment must be founded upon the nature of man, and should consult alike the natural rights, civil wants, and moral interests of his being. All rightful authority is founded in power and law; all just power is founded in right, and as one man's natural right to the character of a lawgiver, is to all intents as good as another's, it follows, that all legitimate law must have its origin in the expressed will of the many.

"*Art. 4th.* As all men are essentially equal in their rights, wants, and interests, it follows from these, that representative government is the only legitimate human rule, to which any people can submit. It is the only kind of government that can possibly reconcile, in any consistent way, the claims of authority, with the advantages of liberty. A prescriptive legislative body, making laws without the knowledge or consent of the people to be

governed by them, is despotism. Legislators without constituents, or peers and fellows deputing them, as their representatives and actors—thus constituting themselves a legislature beyond the control of the people, is an exhibition of tyranny in one of its most dangerous forms. In the momentous affairs of government, nothing should be made the exclusive property of a few, which, by right, belongs to all, and may be safely and advantageously used by the rightful proprietors. The justice of every government depends essentially upon the original consent of the people;—this privilege belongs to every community, in right of the law of nature; and no man or multitude of men, can alter, limit, or diminish it Constitutional law is an expression of the will of the people, and their concurrence in its formation, either personally, or by representation, is essential to its legitimate authority.

"*Art. 5th.* No community can be said, without mockery' to have a constitution where there is a consolidation of the different powers of government in the hands of the same men, and the remaining portion are left, of course, without any security for their rights. Such a case presents an absolute government; a government of men, not principles. A constitution is not the creature of government; the nature of things renders it impossible that it should be an act of government. In strict propriety, it exists anterior to government;—government is based upon, proceeds from, and is the creature of the constitution. A constitution contains the elements and principles of government, and fixes the nature and limits of its form and operations, but is an instrument distinct from government, and by which government is controlled. It is a preliminary act of the people, in the creation of government. It sustains to government the same relation that laws do to the judiciary; the latter is not the source of of law, cannot make laws, or annul them, but is subject to, and governed by law. A constitution recognizes the rights of the people, and provides for their assertion and maintenance. It settles the principles and maxims of government. It fixes the land-marks of legislation. It is the sovereign voice of the people, giving law and limit to themselves and their representatives.

"*Art. 6th.* A government uniting the legislative, judicial, and executive powers in the hands of the same men, is an absurdity in theory, and in practice, tyranny. The executive power, in every government, should be sub-

ordinate to the legislative, and the judicial independent of both. Whenever, therefore, it happens, that these three departments of government are in the hands of the same body of men, and these men not the representatives of the people, first making the laws, then executing them, and finally the sole judges of their own acts, there is no liberty, the people are virtually enslaved, and liable to be ruined at any time. In a government, civil or ecclesiastical, where the same men are legislators, administrators, and judges, in relation to all the laws, and every possible application of them, the people, whether well or ill-treated, are in fact slaves; for the only remedy against such a despotism is revolt. No constitution can be presumed a good one, embodying the principles of correct government, which does not sufficiently guard against the chances and possibility of mal-administration. All absolute governments owe their character to the manner in which they are administered, whereas, in a representative government, with proper checks and balances, it is the interest, even of the vicious, to promote the general welfare by conforming to the laws. The greater the equality established among men by governments, the more virtue and happiness will prevail; for where the voluntary consent of the governed is the basis of government, interest and duty combine to promote the common weal.

"*Art. 7th.* Every community should be the asserter and guardian of its own rights. No government can be administered to the advantage of the governed for any considerable length of time, unless the people retain sufficient power in their own hands to compel their rulers to act correctly. When a government is so constructed that its acts are final, and preclude remedy by appeal to the people, its principles are unjust, and its administration cannot fail to be injurious; a virtuous administration can never change or redeem the vicious principles of a government. And whenever the subjects of a government, whose legislative, executive, and judicial functions pertain to a few, independent of the choice of the people, find themselves aggrieved and oppressed by the conduct of their rulers, without any constitutional remedy for the redress of existing evils, it *then* becomes the duty, and is the imprescriptable right of that people to control their rulers by *extra-judicial* measures.

"*Art. 8th.* Where all the power and forms of government are held and managed by a few, who act without

delegated right by consent of the people, the authority of the rulers is absolute, and the people are enfranchised of all right in the various relations existing between them, as subjects, and those who hold the reins of government. Such a government must always lead to mental debility, will depress the moral vigour of the people, and necessarily abridge the liberty of reasoning and investigation. In all governments of this kind, right is the creature of fortune, and the slave of caprice. Those who live under a government which denies to the people the right of representation, blindly engage to submit to the will of others, right or wrong, and must continue to do so, or else deprive themselves of all the advantages of the community in which they live, in order to get rid of its evils. The enactment of all laws and rules, therefore, should be with and by the consent of the people, and their execution strictly under their control.

"*Art 9th.* The right to be represented, where law is made to govern, is not only essential to civil freedom, but is equally the basis of religious liberty. Civil and religious liberty are intimately connected, they usually live and die together; and he who is the friend of the one, cannot consistently be the enemy of the other. If liberty, as is admitted on all hands, is the perfection of civil society, by what right can religious society become despoiled of this crowning excellence of the social state? The New Testament furnishes the principles, but not the forms of church government; and in the adaptation of forms to these principles, Christian bodies should be governed mainly by the few facts and precedents furnished in the apostolic writings. The will and mind of the Great Head of the church, on this subject, so far as clearly revealed, whether by express statute, or fair implication, cannot be contravened without impiety; but in relation to the variety of topics connected with the internal police, and external relations of the church, on which the Scriptures are silent, it is left to every Christian community to adopt its own regulations, and the same is true of nations. Ministers and private Christians, according to the New Testament, are entitled to equal rights and privileges—an indentity of interests implies an equality of rights. A monopoly of power, therefore, by the ministry, is a usurpation of the rights of the people. No power on the part of the ministry, can deprive the people legitimately of their elective and representative rights; as the ministry cannot think and act for the

people, in matters of principle and conviction, so neither can they legislate for them, except as their authorized representatives.

"*Art.* 10*th.* The government of every Christian church should be strictly a government of principle, in relation to the governed; and every private Christian is as deeply and reasonably interested as the ministry. Dominion over conscience is the most absurd of all human pretensions. The assumption that absolute power in the affairs of church government, is a sacred deposit in the hands of the ministry, libels the genius and charities of the New Testament. Whenever a Christian people place themselves under a ministry, who claim the right of thinking and deciding for them, in matters of faith and morality, they are guilty of impiety, however unintentional, to the Great Head of the church, inasmuch as it is required of every Christian to reflect and determine for himself, in all such cases, and the duty cannot be performed by another. And those ministers who aim at a principality of this kind, in the personal concerns of faith and practice, are plainly guilty of usurped dominion over the rights and consciences of the people.

"*Art.* 11*th.* Expedience and right are different things. Nothing is expedient that is unjust. Necessity and convenience may render a form of government useful and effective for a time, which afterward, under a change of circumstances, and an accumulation of responsibility, may become oppressive and intolerable. That system of things, which cannot be justified by the word of God, and the common sense of mankind, can never be expedient. Submission to power, gradually and insidiously usurped, should seldom or never be received as proof of the legitimate consent of the people to the peculiar form of government by which they are oppressed; as such submission may be the result of principles, attachments, and energies, which owe their existence to causes foreign from the government, which is supposed to produce them. Peaceable submission by the people to a system of government, can never be construed into a proper approval of it, as one of their own choice; for as men by birth and education, may become the subject of a form of civil government they do not approve, so thousands may be born into the kingdom or God, and nurtured in his family, under forms of ecclesiastical polity, materially inconsistent with the lights and notices of revelation on this subject. The continued sufferance and submission

of the people, so far from proving the divine right of those who govern, does not even furnish proof of any right at all, except the claim which arises from mere forbearance.

"*Art. 12th.* Without insisting upon these portions of the New Testament, which go directly against the right of the ministry, to exclusive rule, the well-known indefiniteness of its language, on the subject of church government, should admonish the claimants of such power that their pretensions cannot be sustained. Nevertheless, in all ages since the apostolic, and in all parts of the world, with but few exceptions, a large majority of those calling themselves Christian ministers, have shown a disposition, both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs, to maintain an influence in matters of government, independent of the people, and to suppress the right of inquiry, and freedom of discussion. And this is readily accounted for, by adverting to the fact, that the liberty of thinking and acting, and especially the free expression of opinion, have always lessened the influence of ministerial pretensions, and abridged the claims of an aspiring ministry, to irresponsible domination. It is lamentably true, that in a thousand instances, in the various divisions of papal and protestant Christendom, oppression has been exercised under pretence of duty, and professed veneration for the dead; and their doings, and an earnest contention for pre-existing customs, have been urged as sufficient reasons for withholding the rights of the people, and lording it over God's heritage.

"*Art. 13th.* It is true, to a great extent, that throughout all the divisions of the Christian world, intellect has taken but comparatively little hold of the subject of religion, and still less of the subject of church government; and this affords the ministry an opportunity of misleading the people on the subject of their rights, and in but too many instances, they resign themselves the passive subjects of their religious teachers, without once inquiring whether in doing so they do not dishonour the Great Head of the church, in his members. Christian ministers are men of like passions with other men, they are equally liable to err, and become depraved; they should not be watched with an eye of malignant jealousy, but their errors, oppressions and usurpations, should be met and resisted by the people with confidence and firmness. The people should teach their rulers, that they will find them alike free from the spirit of faction and the

tameness of servility. They should let them know that with every disposition to render proper obedience, they are determined not to be oppressed.

"*Art.* 14*th.* Whenever the members of a church resign the right of suffrage, and of discussing freely and fearlessly the conduct of their rulers, whether it be done by direct concession, or indirectly by attaching themselves to, and continuing within, the pale of a church where such a system of polity obtains, they renounce to a fearful extent one of the first principles of the Protestant religion, and bring dishonour upon its name. Whenever spiritual rulers attempt to check a perfectly free communication of thoughts and feelings among the people,—when the lips and the pens of the laity are interdicted, without their oversight and license; when they attempt to repress honest convictions and free enquiry; when their disapprobation is shewn to all who do not support them, and their displeasure incurred by the diffusion of intelligence among the people, not calculated to increase their power and reputation; then it becomes the duty of the people to decline their oversight, as men unworthy to rule the church of God. The rock on which the church has split for ages, is that the sovereign power to regulate all ecclesiastical matters, (not decided by the Scriptures, and which of right belongs to a Christian community, as such,) has by a most mischievous and unnatural policy, misnamed expediency, been transferred to the hands of a *few* ministers, who have been in part the patricians of the ministry, and the aristocracy of the church.

"*Art.* 15*th.* Government, as a fixed and stable cause in the progress of human affairs, is finally productive of a large amount of good or evil; it is strictly in its operation, a moral cause, in the formation of character; for it necessarily presents circumstances and considerations in the light of reasons and motives which lead to results in the formation of character, that become habitual and permanent. The good of all concerned, therefore, should be the object proposed in the adoption of any form of government; and when a system of government is adopted which calls the attention of the governed from the general welfare, by depriving them of all control in the enactment and execution of the laws, the natural and unavoidable tendency of a government of this description, is vicious and demoralizing; and such are the character and influence of all non-elective governments. The members of a community, who place themselves

under the exclusive control of a few irresponsible persons, as their sole masters in matters of government, thus tamely depriving themselves of the right of representation, and even of existence, except by expatriation, betray a criminal negligence of their best interests, and great inattention to the general welfare; and all governments recognizing such a distinction, contravene necessarily the influence of enlightened conviction and independent inquiry.

"*Art.* 16*th.* Any government that does not allow the people to meet, deliberate, and decide upon matters that concern themselves, is evidently oppressive. For those who are not the representatives of the people, to make laws for them, and then deny them the freedom of candid inquiry and honest animadversion, is a measure, as irrational as it is unjust. The maxim which assumes that the ministry have a right to rule and dictate exclusively in the great concerns of religion, is the fruitful source of *implicit faith*, which tamely and without inquiry receives instruction at the hands of men, as authoritative and final —impiously receiving 'for doctrines the commandments of men, and perverting the oracles of God.' When the ministry judge and determine for the people, without their legitimate concurrence, as matter of right, conformity becomes a question of policy, instead of resulting from conscience and principle. A government which denies to the governed the right to inquire, remonstrate, and demand withheld justice—which from its structure and operation is calculated to darken the understanding and mislead the judgment—and thus compel obedience to its measures, in the great interests of right and wrong, must be essentially unjust, and ought not to be submitted to.

"*Art.* 17*th.* No power possesses so fatal a principle of increase and accumulation in itself as ecclesiastical power. Its facilities for reproduction and multiplication are many and fearful, and should be vigilantly guarded against by all who consider the image of God as closely connected with the rights of man. And whenever the growth and manifestation of this power, in any of its innumerable forms and modes of operation, shall clearly amount to an invasion of christian rights, the injured and oppressed should resist the encroachment with manly decision and unyielding remonstrance. In every church, where the principle of representation is excluded, in the affairs of its government, the right of private judgment becomes a

nullity, and faith and practice are, necessarily, to a great extent, the offspring of prescription. The right of deciding what are the will and mind of God in matters of faith and discipline, by prescriptive interpretation, is conceded in the scriptures to no man or body of men exclusively: of course, the right of judgment belongs to all, equally and inalienably; and when the ministry avail themselves of the indifference, inattention, or ignorance of the people, brought under their charge from time to time, to constitute themselves their legislative masters and executive guardians, they usurp the dominion of conscience, and, although never complained of, are *de facto* religious tyrants, because they assume and exercise rights that do not, and cannot in the nature of things, belong to them. It should not be overlooked, moreover, that when the ministry are considered by the laity, as the sole judges and depositories of faith and discipline, the people lose the only powerful motive, the only direct incentive they can possibly have, to inquire and decide for themselves, in the infinitely momentous concerns of truth and duty. Such a monopoly of power by the ministry, tends directly to mental debasement, consequent indecision of character, insincerity, and misguided zeal.

"*Art.* 18*th*. That form of ecclesiastical polity, under which the revenues of the church proceed from the people, when they have no participation in the enactment of its laws, furnishes no proper constitutional balance of power; for the legislative council of the church, consisting of the ministry alone, have it in their power at any time, to render the contributions of the people to an amount sufficient for their competent supply and even their affluence, not a voluntary service, but a condition of membership, when such government ceases to be free, and necessarily becomes tyrannical. Any government which places the public property of the governed in the hands of its rulers, so that it must proceed from their gift exclusively, without any constitutional negative in its approbation on the part of the people, is unjust and vicious in its nature. Property is dominion held in right of power, and if in the hands of a few, the balance of government is destroyed, by enabling them to control the destiny of the whole. As it is the duty of every community to support those who are only called to the administration of its affairs, so it is plainly a matter of right that the will of the people should determine the

necessary amount of supplies and the mode of their assessment and collection.

"*Art.* 19*th.* Punishments should never be inflicted in any community, except when strictly necessary, and plainly called for by the public good; and, in all cases, the infliction should be according to law. All punishments proceeding from the regular administration of constitutional law, should be submitted to without resistance.

"*Art.* 20*th.* The subjects of all governments, have a right to know the official acts and doings of their agents and officers, and to demand their publication accordingly.

"*Art.* 21*st.* The vindication of an injured people, in a contention for their rights, is furnished by the shameful denial of their existence.

"*Art.* 22*nd.* Any movement by the oppressed, to recover their rights, will be resisted by those who have oppressed them; but suffering and persecution, in a cause which the love of God and man requires, should be fearlessly met and resolutely borne."

The *Divine Right* of Ecclesiastical legislatures is evi dently to adopt and establish those Church polities which will secure the mutual rights of the ministers and members of the Church, and will diffuse and strengthen the true spirit of the Christian religion, which is to love all men, and live peaceably with them, and as will produce a perfectly free communication of thoughts and feelings among the brethren. And whenever the legislature becomes insensible to that tranquility and peace which should prevail among Christians, who should be the most pacific people in the world, and for the purpose of securing a kind of sovereignty for themselves, establish Church polities which interfere with the social freedom, or disturb the peace of the great brotherhood of the Christian Church, by producing a proud and haughty spirit of denominational superiority, which prompts Christian belligerents, who should be brethren, to envy and revile each other in different ways—assailing each other with words, as with darts and spears—ministers inveighing against ministers—people rising up against people—mutually inflaming each other with strife, quarrels,

threats, rivalship, hypocrisy, and dissimulation, to the greatest height of malignity so common amongst the Methodist Churches, those polities should not be submitted to. But by all who respect the image of God they should be with manly determination remonstrated against as impious, until so corrected that the following of the mild and gentle Jesus shall be as brethren assembled in the same house of worship, without distinction.

Let us take a few examples as illustrations of this position. Although the doctrine of salvation was no new or strange doctrine to those who were familiar with the literature, piety, and righteousness of the Hebrew nation, the learned in Hebrew doctrines obviously knew the anointed of God, as he appeared unto Abraham, communed with Isaac, spoke to Jacob, and the prophets after them. But it is evident that there were many things connected with the benevolent diffusion of the gospel, which appeared as new and contrary to the polity of the Jewish Church.

God in, the fulfilment of his gracious promise, that, "When he shall become a great and mighty nation, in him all the nations of the earth shall be blessed," gave a divine vision to Cornelius of Cesarea, commanding him to send for Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, which would render him obnoxious to the superstitions of his country. This was something new. For a Roman soldier to send for one who regarded him as unclean, a man of violence and plunder, and the murderer of Jesus Christ, who lately had been crucified. Surely it is an unpardonable innovation upon established usages. But Cornelius, though entangled by circumstances from which it was not easy to free himself, was a man of piety and benevolence. Hence a suitable associate for all the benevolent. But Peter, who so tenaciously adhered to the usages of the Jewish Church, as "to be blamed," needed instruction on this subject. He regarded it as sinful for an Apostle of Jesus Christ to associate with a sinner of the Gentiles—and still more criminal to worship with a Roman soldier, who had enslaved his

country, whom he had been taught to esteem no better than a dog. And when he went to pray, he "saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending upon him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners and let down to the earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air, and there came a voice to him, Rise Peter, kill, and eat. But Peter said, not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time. What God has cleaned call not thou common. According to the Jewish customs, it was unlawful for a Jew to associate with one of any other nation; but in this vision God taught Peter not to call any man common or unclean whom he had cleansed. Peter changed his dogmas of exclusive privilege, and went over to a congregation of uncircumcised Gentiles, and preached with boldness—That God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him. And when his conduct was suspected as a violation of the law of God, he justified himself in a manner so perfectly satisfactory to the other disciples and brethren, that they rejoiced and magnified the grace of God, that had granted repentance unto life to the Gentiles also.

Again we may speak of the Apostle Paul, who in regard to faith was a rigid Pharisee, and confined salvation to the Jews alone, and proselytes to their faith, and that salvation was secured to them meritoriously by the observance of Jewish rites, traditions, and ceremonies. He utterly rejected Jesus Christ as an impostor, believing that his crucifixion was but a righteous retribution of his blasphemy, and that his followers deserved a similar fate for the same cause. And he "verily thought that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and believing that it would be more meritorious service to God and his fellow men, to rid the world of this pestilential heresy of the Nazarenes, he

consented to their death, and persecuted them into strange cities. And having obtained letters from the high priest to go to Damascus, where many had fled toshelter themselves from persecution, in the blindness of his zeal, under the influence of a bigoted religion, Paul, distinguished for great powers of intellect and unbending regard for integrity, with all good conscience towards God, commenced his journey to that famous city, said to be founded by Abraham himself, on a mission of cruel persecution. He probably had arrived within sight of the city, and was flattering himself with a speedy opportunity to display his infatuated zeal for God, when he was arrested by a light from heaven, similar to that of the Shechinah or sacred glory, which generally accompanied the Divine presence. At the same time a voice from heaven "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me." He instantly fell to the earth and trembling said, "Lord who art thou?"—"I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest," was the reply. Paul being convicted of his wrong, did not confer with flesh and blood, and delay for a moment, but obeyed with a practical faith. His submission was not only a humiliating defeat of his most sanguine plans and purposes, but perfectly mortifying to his ambition and pride. To be led a suppliant to the feet of one of those he came to persecute, in that very city where he had expected to enter by authority, and spread terror and dismay among the disciples of that Lord whose mercy he now implored. But Paul being convinced, changed his faith, renouncing Judaism, he received Christ without delay, and, instead of persecuting the Christians, he confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving Jesus was the very Christ—the true Messiah.

With the history of the Reformation before us, we see the atrocious superstitious vices and usurpation of the Roman Church—religion aggrandized—a theocracy established, of which the Pope, as Christ's vicegerent on earth, was the head—society a prey to whatever he judged necessary to his policy, without any regenerating or preserving principles, and Martin Luther, a holy and

irreproachable monk bending to papist maxims. But one day in particular, wishing to obtain an indulgence promised by the Pope to any one who should on his knees ascend what is called Pilate's staircase, the poor Saxon monk was slowly climbing those steps, which they told him had been miraculously transported from Jerusalem to Rome. But while he was going through this meritorious work, he thought he heard a voice like thunder speaking to his heart; *The just shall live by faith.* These words which already on two occasions had struck upon his ear, as the voice of the angel of God, resounded instantaneously and powerfully within him. He started up in terror on the steps on which he had been crawling; he was horrified at himself; and, struck with shame for the degradation to which superstition had debased him, he fled from the scene of his folly. This was the decisive epoch in the life of Luther. From that hour he gave up his former religious tenets and dogmas. He left Rome and returned to Wittemburgh, full of grief and indignation. Turning away from the superstitions of Popery he embraced the light and liberty which the Holy Scriptures offers to the human family.

And now, instead of submitting to all the vain practices which the superstitious Church enjoined, in order o purchase the remission of sins, he put Christ in the place the priest had usurped, and felt himself born again as a new free man, and introduced into the paradise of God. Allow us to introduce one more example on this point.

A little more than a century ago, a relaxation of pure and undefiled religion apparently threatened to impede the progress of future ages. A desolating torrent of worldly honours, ease, and pleasure, was overwhelming the Church. An element of corruption lay hidden in its bosom, almost as if it had returned to the faith of Rome. The torch of Christianity, which emits from its flame light and life, was going out in darkness. At the period of which we are speaking, when a revival of religion was so pressingly needed in one of the most aris-

tocratic universities in the world, might have been found a young man named John Wesley, imbibing rigid high Church principles and superstitions, of which subsequently he was "heartily ashamed." This may seem strange to some, who are not familiar with his life, but is historically true. Divine Providence, however, opened his eyes to see that if sinners were saved they must be saved by grace, not in form only but in power, whether in the Church or in the open field; and that the doctrine of Apostolic succession, as claimed by high Churchmen was contrary to the genus of Christianity, the succession depending, not upon any personal transmitted virtue or authority, but upon divine and inward call, and the appointment of his providence. This change in his sentiments provoked a fierce persecution against him. The pulpit of the established Church to which he belonged was closed and guarded. But the unflinching Wesley, contrary to his former dogmas, resorted to the fields and commons, to the highways and hedges, to preach unshackled the gospel of Christ, which sanctifies and ennobles men, and raises them to a holy oneness, by the new and living principle it communicates to them, and as his field of usefulness extended to Scotland and America, beyond the means of supplying it by the few ordained men at his command, he ordained assistants from among those of his brethren whom persecution and bigotry had left him. If then there be any force in the sentiments we have ventured to express and the examples produced, it is evident that if the trifling tenets which at present divide the Methodist Church have originated in ecclesiastical tyranny and ecclesiastical corruption, and engendered ruinous animosities, contrary to the law of love, it is not only our privilege but imperative duty to make such alterations as are indispensable to secure the peace, harmony, and welfare of the Church, by bringing together in the closest bonds of brotherly fellowship, all living believers who seek above all things else the glory of God, and the spiritual welfare of one another.

CHAPTER VI.

OBJECTIONS AND HINDRANCES TO A COMPLETE METHODIST UNION.

To the doctrine taught in this work there are some seeming objections, which we propose to notice in this chapter. These objections are apparently weighty and serious, and however logical and scriptural our reasoning upon this subject may appear to us, the work is not done until these objections are clearly, candidly, and completely answered. And one cause of objection to a union of the various Methodist denominations, is that the question has been heretofore discussed in a practical aspect, proportioned to its importance. A union has been assumed unattainable, and no practical scheme has been devised and submitted for the consideration of the Methodist community. And antagonists to this scheme, of respectable numbers, talents, and piety, have presented opposite argumentative proofs. They regard it as impossible for the various Methodist denominations so fully to understand each other as to harmoniously co-operate in the advancement of the cause of God in the earth. It is due to our opponents, it is due to our readers, it is due to the Church of Christ, that we give some attention to these objections. And although they are of sufficient importance to demand attention, they are not sufficiently invincible to cause us to abandon our purpose, or leave our opposers with excuse.

A trivial objection, yet one that has no little weight with some against all such efforts as we now advocate is this: That the union of the various Methodist denominations into one incorporation might be accomplished

without promoting the object for which such union is desirable; and that such an amalgamation might be productive of evils, more than counterbalancing any good results that might flow from it. It is argued, that if all the Methodist denominations in Canada were united into one vast Church there would be set up in Canada as in Roman countries, an ecclesiastical despotism in comparison with which our present divisions would be tolerable. And therefore our divisions are necessary to keep Christians from corrupting themselves with the world, and that God blesses them to that end. But we ask is it necessary for God to adopt the policy of the corrupt politicians of Canada, who create conflicting interests among their constituents, so that they can play off one against the other in order to preserve their own rule. Do we find any such policy taught in the word of God. Was Israel more pure when the tribes separated, or was the primitive Church, when all were united, more worldly than in these days of divisions. God needs no schisms which are sinful, to preserve His Church from corruption. These jealous rivalries rather create worldly-mindedness, corruption, and usurpation, than holy love to God and to one another.

We do not say that Church organizations cannot be fearfully used as worldly engines to advance the usurpation of either spiritual or political scheming despots. We frankly acknowledge that worldly men, seeking worldly advancement, have bribed the leaders of ecclesiastical bodies in Canada, and thereby have produced more disastrous political dissensions in our country, and vital godliness declined in exact proportion. We know that when the primitive Church forgot that Christ's kingdom was not of this world, political and ecclesiastical corruption and tyranny grew up side by side, and Christianity was left with but the name. But the Methodist denominations are composed in the main of living believers, having a common faith, and whose differences are regarded by each other as non-essential. They all agree in this important point, that the Church should not as-

sume the badge of any political party, and if she does so, in order to secure government favours, she, like Judas, betrays her Lord and master for pieces of silver.

Hence the union for which we plead, is not to unite the cold and hot—the enlightened and the bigoted—the saint and the sinner—the worldly and spiritual, but to unite living believers, who desire above all things else, the glory of God and the welfare of their fellow-men. The evils we have referred to, could not arise from such a union, but on the contrary, it would be a powerful antidote by which they would be destroyed. Never again let our separations be mentioned as a political advantage when they should humble us in the dust.

A second objection is that it is wrong to compromise what we hold to be truth.

We answer, we do not advocate such a compromise, but we urge as duty on all, for the sake of peace, a sacrifice of those prejudices which are not conscientiously held as of Divine obligatton. If one denomination regards some thing of Divine authority, and the others do not, and can give no scriptural objections against receiving it, they would commit sin, if for peace sake, they would not make the sacrifice. Now with these views before us let us examine the essential difference of Church polity, which divide the Methodist denominations. With regard to the articles of religion, there is no difference in the various disciplines. The only real difficulty in the way of union seems to be in the order of the ministry. The Episcopal Methodist hold to a three-fold order of ministry. But they do not undertake to pronounce on the validity of any other form of ordination. That God in His word has expressed no certain form of Church Government our ablest writers have admitted. The lowest sacred office in the Methodist Episcopal is that of deacon. There is none but readily admit that this office existed in the primitive Church, but the question arises, was the office lay or clerical. In giving the true answer to this question allow us to quote the fol-

lowing paragraph from Watson's Institutes. "Much light is thrown upon the constitution of the primitive Churches by recollecting that they were formed very much upon the model of the Jewish synagogues." The officers of the synagogue were rulers, elders or presbyters, and ministers or servants. The office of deacon corresponds with that of servants or deputy to the elders. It was the duty of the deputy to nourish and support the congregation, and to take charge of the sacred books. The scriptural references to the office of deacon we think sustain the position that it was a subordinate part of the regular ministry.

The mode of their appointment is proof in point. They were set apart to their office by prayer and the imposition of hands. Their qualification for office implies the same thing. They were not only to be men of honest report, so necessary for the faithful discharge of responsible temporal duties; but they were to be men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, a qualification for preaching the gospel.

Accordingly we find Stephen, one of the seven deacons, being full of faith and the Holy Ghost, preaching the truth, not only before the council, but disputing with the Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and Silicians, for which he suffered martyrdom. These primitive deacons administered baptism, and cast out devils. Philip "went down to Jerusalem, and preached Christ even to them," and "the people with one accord gave heed unto the things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the things which he did, for many unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice came out of many which were possessed of them." And "When they believed, Philip, preaching the things concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Again we read of his baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch. That they were a different order and inferior in rank to that of elders, is evident from the instructions relative to their ordination given by Paul to Timothy. That having

"used the office of a deacon well, they purchase to themselves a good degree," That is most probably the office of an elder. That the primitive Church sets us the example of such an office, our sister Churches do not deny. That it is not enjoined by the scriptures we admit. We have the office, copying the example of the primitive Church and as an expedient means of good order in the administration of ecclesiastical business. Other Methodist denominations have no deacons, not deeming the office necessary. Any Church can have them or not, particular forms of Church government not being essential to the validity of the Church. Hence no one branch of the Methodist Church can have conscientious scruples with regard to this office; we are satisfied with it, but we should sacrifice it if the concession would relieve the Church from the fearful sin and evils of disunion. With regard to the office of elder, presbyter, or minister, there is no disagreement.

But whether the office of Bishop was a distinct and superior order of ministers to that of elders, holding by Divine right the exclusive powers of government and ordination, so that no man has a right to execute any of the functions of the ministry, except he hath had Episcopal consecration and ordination, has been sharply contested since the reformation.

As far as the Bible, which must be the great arbiter in all matters of religious controversy, gives us information, there is no exclusive power given to Bishops over elders. The terms elder, presbyter, and Bishop are applied in scripture to the same individual. This position is clearly proved by Watson in the following quotation from his Institutes. "When St. Paul, for instance, sends for the 'elders,' or presbyters of the Church of Ephesus to meet him at Miletus, he thus charges them, 'Take heed to yourselves, to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers," or Bishops. That here the elders or presbyters are called Bishops cannot be denied, and the very office assigned to them, to feed the

Church of God, and the injunctions to "take heed to the flock" shew that the office of elder, or presbyter, is the same as that of pastor in the passage just quoted from the Epistle to the Ephesians. St. Paul directs Titus to "ordain elders (presbyters) in every city," and then adds, as a directory of ordination "a Bishop must be blameless," &c., plainly marking the same office by these two convertible appellations. Bishops and deacons are the only classes of ministers addressed in the Epistle to the Philippians; and if the presbyters were not understood to be included under the term Bishops, the omission of any notice of this order of ministers is not to be accounted for. As the Apostles, when not engaged in their own extraordinary vocation, appear to have filled the office of stated ministers in those Churches in which they occasionally resided for considerable periods of time, they sometimes called themselves presbyters. "The elder" (presbyter) "unto the elect lady, 2nd John i., 1. "The elders," (presbyters) "which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, (presbyter) and from what follows, the highest offices of teaching and government in the Church are represented as vested in the presbyters." Mr. Watson here proves, that presbyter and bishop is identical in order, although the intrinsic power of order, and consequently of ordination, was equally in presbyters and bishops, yet by mutual consent, to prevent confusion, it could be intrusted to a bishop, president, or superintendent, not of Divine right, but by the delegation of power from the body of elders. Mr. Wesley remarks on this subject, that the plea of the Divine right of episcopacy was never heard of in the primitive church. And we have already established that there can be no intrinsic importance to any form of Church government, only as the times, places, and circumstances would justify. And it seems reasonable that the external form of Church government in any country, should approach as much as possible to the form of the civil administration of that country. In British dominions we have combined in

our civil government a limited monarchy, a limited aristocracy, and a limited democracy, the three forms of government blended, without the abuses of either; a three-fold cord that is not easily broken. And when we compare our permanency as a nation with the divided state of the savage tribes where there is unlimited democracy, every man meeting around the council fire, or with the constant convulsions of republics, (as seen at the present in the United States,) where there is an attempt to blend democracy and aristocracy without the third cementing element, we must express the conviction, that the episcopal form of Church government being copied from the primitive Church and corresponding with our civil administration, is most suited to Methodists in British dominions. And we might with safety add, that a large portion of the protestant world is either nominally or really episcopal. Many of our Wesleyan brethren with whom we have conversed, approve of that form of government. And probably corrupt churches could best be approached, having that church policy and ordination which they, in common with ourselves, retain, and which corresponds with the civil administration to which they are attached.

If our brethren adopt the episcopal form of Church government, however modified, the only hindrance to complete union, so far as we are concerned, would, we think, be removed. It is argued, however, that the Methodist Episcopacy is a spurious episcopacy. In answering this objection it should be remembered, that Church government, though it may be modelled after that of the state, should be neither monarchical, aristocratic, or democratic, but based upon the scriptures and the actual wants of the times. The Methodist Episcopacy was the result of providential circumstances. Mr. Wesley, as we have shewn in the second chapter of this work, went out preaching to the masses in the high-ways, private houses, and open fields. Multitudes were converted to God, whom he formed into classes or bands, and provi-

ded such helps as persecution and providence had left at his command, not knowing what form of consistence the societies he was collecting would assume, only consulting the openings of present duty; some of those assistants proved to be men of deep piety, sound sense, and strong natural powers. As the field of their operations enlarged, it became necessary for these assistants to supply a plurality of appointments, and then arose the itinerancy. When Methodists who had emigrated to America applied to Mr. Wesley for preachers he sent several, among whom was Francis Asbury, who acted as superintendent in America, performing the same functions that Mr. Wesley did in England, but not without the concurrence of his brethren. In the minutes for 1782, is the following item:

Question 19.—"Do the brethren in Conference unanimously choose brother Asbury to act according to Mr. Wesley's original appointment, and preside over the American Conferences, and the whole work?

Answer.—Yes."

But was Mr. John Wesley an Episcopalian? We give the answer in his own words, in a letter to Clarke, Works, vol. 7, p. 285. As to my own judgment, I still believe the episcopal form of Church government to be scriptural and apostolic. Did he establish our episcopacy? He most assuredly established the methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. If we examine the minutes of 1785, we will find the following item. "Following the counsel of Mr. John Wesley, who recommended the episcopal mode of Church government, we thought it best to become an episcopal Church." These minutes were published in London under Mr. Wesley's eye, without any disapprobation.

But did Mr. Wesley ordain Dr. Coke to the episcopal office? Let the following facts answer. We learn from Drew's life of Coke that Mr. Wesley proposed to Dr. Coke his ordination to this office six or seven months before he received it. The Doctor was startled at the pro-

position, doubting Mr. Wesley's authority to ordain him, as he was not a bishop. Mr. Wesley recommended him to read Lord King's Primitive Church, and gave him time to reflect. Subsequently, the Doctor accepted the appointment, and was ordained to the office of Bishop by the imposition of hands, by John Wesley and other presbyters of the Church of England. Now if Coke was not ordained bishop, what was the nature of his office, he being a presbyter of the Church of England previous to this ordination. A little light will be thrown on this subject, by the following extract from Mr. Wesley's circular letter on Dr. Coke's appointment. "For many years I have been importuned from time to time to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling preachers; but I have still refused, not only for peace sake, but because I was determined, as little as possible, to violate the established order of the national Church to which I belonged. But the case is widely different between England and America. Here there are Bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish ministers, so that for some hundred miles together there are none, either to baptize or administer the sacrament. *Here therefore my scruples are at an end.* Now if Coke's ordination was not to some sacred office, it could not have been regarded as an interference with the established usages of the established Church. Again, when Wesley was charged with impropriety, he defended himself by appealing to Lord King and the Alexandrian Church. And further, when his brother Charles, who was a high Churchman, remonstrated against Dr. Coke's ambition and rashness, John Wesley in his reply utters not a word of denial in relation, either to the titles used or the form of government, but simply vindicated the necessity of the course and the character of Coke in these words: "I believe Dr. Coke as free from ambition as covetousness. He has done nothing rashly that I know." Again, Charles Wesley in his letter to Dr. Chandler speaks of his brother having

"assumed the character, ordained elders, and consecrated a bishop."

Hence the episcopacy of the United States may be considered as expedient, providential and scriptural, and by the eader referring again to the 3rd section of the 2nd chapter of this work he will be convinced that an independent Methodist Episcopal Church was established in Canada, equally providential, expedient, and scriptural. Now if there be no conscientious hindrances on the part of our brethren with regard to the validity of Episcopal ordination, why not embrace it. But if they conscientiously regard Episcopal ordination as utterly opposed to the mind and will of Christ, and in no shape to be received, on pain of his displeasure, then of course we should not ask them to receive it. The opinion, however, of the Wesleyan Conference we have on this point. They receive ministers, having received Episcopal ordination without re-ordination.

But should our brethren conscientiously regard a moderate Episcopacy as sinful, so that by no means they would receive it, it remains for us todecide if we will receive their ordination, which we acknowledge to be scriptural. Now if our brethren cannot receive our Church polity we can receive theirs without any sacrifice of conscience. And we ought to do it, if it will restore what God requires, the unity of the Church.

But it may be objected that we should not disparage our own ordination by receiving another. We say that it can be received hypothetically. In this way we can respect our ordination and yet satisfy the scruples of our brethren. Like as a duplicate check of the one is received the other adds nothing to it or takes nothing from it. While no one would object to receiving both, where pecuniary interests are involved no Christian should object to a similar course where a greater treasure, the unity of the Church, is concerned. Another supposed hindrance to a union is the office of presiding Elder. We just remark, in short, that many of our own minis-

ters question the propriety of any part of our ministers remaining for a period of four years, or less, without pastoral care. And although it is urged by some, especially these SUB-BISHOPS, that the management of the various circuits in their respective districts, with their travelling and local preachers, exhorters and stewards, with all financial and other interests, come under their quarterly examination, yet by every thinking man the office, in its present shape, must be regarded as worse than useless. There is no circuit business but can be managed by the stationed minister, and it is properly his work as pastor. And these quarterly examinations of the presiding Elder are an unrighteous interference or meddling with other men's matters. And it is not uncommonly the case that the presiding Elder, who preaches but twice in three months, and sometimes not that, will sap out of the quarterly Conference an amount nearly equal to that paid to the travelling preacher, who, perhaps, has preached every day, and not unfrequently oftener during the whole quarter.

Hence that office could readily be substituted by a chairman as is the present usage in our sister Methodist Churches. In relation to our practice of ordaining local preachers, we should remark that it would be necessary to allow those already ordained to retain their office, and no wrong would be done to any man by refusing to ordain him to sacred orders while he pursues a secular calling.

Another hindrance to a complete union, is the lay delegation of the Methodist New Connexion Church. The only question of difference on this point is not whether the laity should have any voice in the control of the Church, for the Methodist Episcopal and Wesleyan Churches concede this at once, but whether this control shall be put into a representative form by a lay delegation to the Conference.

We know that some Methodist writers take very high despotic ground in this matter, and say that " the Metho-

dist polity is based on a surrender of all personal rights" because a connexion with the Methodist Church is voluntary. This sentiment is taught in the following quotation from Dr. Poond.

"The rights which a Methodist possesses, as such, are purely conventional. They are not natural, but acquired rights, and they are determined by the articles of association, contained in our book of Discipline. The Church is a voluntary association, entered into for religious purposes. Whoever enters into its communion is entitled to all the immunities which the articles of association hold out to him and no more. If he finds, upon experiment, that the religious advantages he acquires do not compensate him for the sacrifices he is required to make, he has an indefeasible right to withdraw from the community; but he has no right to demand of the Church to change her economy for his accommodation."

Now if the Methodist Church is the Church of men, there would be some plausibility in the Doctor's argument. But if the Methodist Church is the Church of God, which she professes to be, then the rights of its members are natural, and not acquired. God has made it man's imperative duty to connect himself with the Church, for "the Lord added to the Church daily, such as should be saved." It is therefore evident that it is the will of God that men should be united to the Church hence obligatory. Our connexion with, and privileges in the Church, or our obedience to its laws, does not depend upon our own choice, advantage, or immunities, bu upon the will of God. And we cannot throw off the obligations he lays upon us by voluntarily dissolving our connexion with the Church. Nor are our rights as Church members based upon any certain human rules or human compact, but on the relation we hold to God and his people. There arises therefore, from the nature that relation and its necessary obligations, a right as members of the Church to participate in the enactment of those laws by which we are to be governed. And that

class of ecclesiastics who would deprive the members of the Church of their natural and scriptural privileges by attempting to bind them to any set of rules they have established or may in their wisdom establish, truly merit the charge of usurpation and tyranny ; and that tyranny is more aggravating when it is remembered that the membership is constantly investing large amounts of money in the erection of churches, parsonages and schools, and according to the scriptures is depended upon for the maintenance of the ministry ; and although such investments and support are free and voluntary benefactions, and does not secure to the donors legal property, or are not made the terms of membership, yet righteously they do secure to the givers a right to legislate in reference to the distribution or control of such property.

But allowing the right, we question the necessity, expediency, or practibility of a lay delegation in either the General or Annual Conferences. In order to come to a proper understanding of this subject, we should consider on what particular questions the laity should have a voice.

1st, They have no right to legislate on the articles of religion. That these are based on the word of God, all agree, therefore should not be changed either by ministers or by members.

2nd, They have no right to legislate on the general rules ; for these we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, which is the only rule and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. And all these we know his spirit writes on truly awakened hearts. These being in accordance with the gospel, the Church did not make, and therefore should not alter.

3rd, They have no right to legislate on the forms of receiving or ordaining ministers, because according to the scriptures this pertains to the ministerial office.

Laymen can claim no right to legislate in the Church only in reference to the temporal economy, and matters which concern themselves. And not one-tenth of the

business of either of the Conferences of this nature. And further, the quarterly meeting Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which are composed almost entirely of laymen, limit the action of the Annual and General Conferences in these respects, by the following restrictions. "They" the general conference "shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers, of trial by a committee and of appeal. Neither shall they do away the privileges of our members, of trial before the society or by a committee, and of appeal.

They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern to any purpose other than for the benefit of the travelling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children; provided nevertheless, that upon the joint recommendation of three-fourths of the Quarterly Meeting Conferences throughout our Church, (Mission stations excepted,) the question being carried in each by a majority of three-fourths of the members present, then the General Conference shall have power, by a majority of three-fourths, to alter any matter or point embraced in the foregoing restrictions, according as the same may have been recommended afore-mentioned. No new rule or regulation, or alteration of any rule or regulation, now in force, respecting our temporal economy: such as the building of meeting-houses, the order to be observed therein, the allowance to the ministers and preachers, their widows, and children, the raising annual supplies for the propagation of the gospel, (the missions excepted,) or the making up the allowance of the preachers, &c., shall be considered of any force or authority until such rule, regulation, or alteration shall have been approved of by three-fourths of all the Quarterly Meeting Conferences throughout the connexion. Nor shall any new rule, regulation, or alteration respecting the doctrines of our Church, the rights and privileges of our local preachers and members—such as the receiving persons on trial and into full connexion; the conditions on which they

shall retain their membership; the manner of bringing to trial, finding guilty, and reproving, suspending, or excluding disorderly persons from society and Church privileges; have any force or authority until laid before the Quarterly Conferences and approved as aforesaid.

We see therefore from the above quotation from our Book of Discipline, that the General Conference cannot authoritatively levy taxes upon the laity, or make any pecuniary contribution the condition of Membership in the Church, or interfere in temporal matters. The largest amount of the business of the conference is to make rules and regulations for the more effectual prosecution of the great work of the evangelization of the world, which scripturally belongs to the ministerial office. Perhaps the following extract from the Report of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States for 1828 will give some light on this subject, it says:—"We arrogate no authority to enact any laws of our own, either of moral or civil force. Our commission is to preach the gospel and to enforce the moral discipline, established by the one lawgiver by those spiritual powers vested in us, as subordinate pastors, who watch over souls as they that must give an account to the Chief Shepherd. We claim no strictly legislative power, although we grant the terms legislature and legislation have been used, even among ourselves. In a proper sense, however, they are not strictly applicable to our General Confereuce. A mistake on this point has probably been the source of much erroneous reasoning, and some consequent dissatisfaction. *Did we claim any authority to enact laws to affect either life or limb, to touch the persons or to tax the property of our members, they ought unquestionably to be directly represented among us.* But they know we do not. We certainly, then, exercise no civil legislation. As to the moral code, we are subject, equally with themselves, to one Lord. We have no power to add to, or take from, to alter, or to modtfy a single item of his statutes. Whether laymen or minis-

ters be the authorized expounders and administrators of those laws, we can confidently rely on the good Christian sense of the great body of our brethren to judge. These well know, also, that whatever exposition of them we apply to others, the same are applied equally to ourselves, and, in some instances, with peculiar strictness.

Again, lay representation is not needed in the annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at least for its business, except a few judical items relating alone to travelling and local preachers, is entirely executive and concerns no class of Church members, except the preachers."

It is obvious from the foregoing remarks, that a lay representation, for which some are very tenacious, is almost without an object. There is certainly no object sufficient to compensate for the inconvenience, trouble, and extra expense. If delegates are sent, some one must bear the expense, either the delegate or his constituents. If the delegate bears his own expense they must be men of wealth and leisure, for no business man, either farmer, tradesman, physician, merchant, or lawyer, can be found who can give that attention to the duties of a de legate which the office requires. This would make rich idle men necessary to us, and idle men would not be the best representatives to the Church Legislature. If the constituents pay the expense they must provide a fund for that purpose. This would require a tax in some way. To levy a tax is to suppose a law which will enforce it, and no other law could enforce it but such as would excommunicate those that would not comply with the requisition: this would make a pecuniary consideration, the condition of membership, which is contrary to the word of God. Again, if such tax is levied, it must either be by an assessment on property or by a poll-tax. The first would be attended with trouble, and endless disputes and vexations; the last would be unjust and oppressive; either appears absurd and impracticable. Perhaps it may be raised by subscription in some divi-

sions, but in others again it would fail, perhaps for the want of means. Then poor districts would be deprived, by poverty, of the privileges of the Church which would be enjoyed by their wealthier brethren. This scheme would be equally absurd and impracticable ; so far then from there being advantages derived from a lay delegation in the Conference there would be a sacrifice of many privileges which the members of the Church now enjoy. And it is to be feared that such a representation would speedily bring about a dismemberment of any ecclesiastical union, there being an impossibility to have a proportionate number of ministers and laymen, or a general representation of laymen from the remote districts within the boundaries of the various Annual Conferences. One of the leading ministers in the Protestant Methodist Church in the United States in an admonitory letter to his brethren on this subject, declared that "they had no little difficulty in keeping their denomination from being scattered to the winds by a loose and deplorable spirit of anarchy. But for the purpose of meeting the feelings of all, in the promotion of a union we could have no objection to, having a limited business Committee to be appointed by the various Quarterly Meetings on some practical plan, whose duty it should be to make suggestions to the Conference relative to temporal matters, allowing still the prerogatives of the Quarterly Meeting Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

Another trivial hindrance to a complete Methodist amalgamation, is the connexion of the Wesleyan Methodist with the English Conference. And on this subject we shall guard against stultifying ourselves by allowing our prejudices to gain so complete a mastery over our judgment and love of unions as to say that that union is an insurmountable barrier in the way of complete Methodist union. Whatever may be said of the origin of that connexion or its present humiliating subjection to a foreign body, all must confess that the Wesleyan Church is composed of truly converted men and evangelical

ministers, who are our brethren. And what some call a foreign yoke is more tolerable than our present divisions. The one or the other we must have. Now which; of the two evils choose the least. But, perhaps, what appears to some to be monstrous despotism, is far less oppressive and injurious than their prejudices will allow them to believe. Considering the growing wealth of our country and the intelligent character of its inhabitants, we unequivocally say, that if Canadian Methodists would cease their domestic broils and unite as a mighty phalanx against the powers of darkness, they would need wider fields of labour than Canada can afford. Then a connexion with our English Methodist brethren, who are establishing Missions in almost every part of the world, would be an advantage. Our limits will not allow us to multiply argument here, but we will candidly express the conviction that if we believe that our brethren in England are true followers of Christ, that no spirit but an evil one could influence us to refuse a connexion with them on the pain of those sinful divisions which are productive of incalculable evils to the Church, and dishonorable to the very name of Christianity.

And if we, as Christians, would cultivate the humble Spirit of Christ, and as assiduously examine our own defects as we watch the defects of other denominations, these little differences in Church polity would not long divide the Methodist societies, between whom, in all doctrine and practical points, there is almost an exact agreement. Oh may the day soon come when true Christians will give this subject, which involves consequences affecting the highest interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom, a prayerful consideration. Oh may that glad hour soon arrive, when the Methodist family, instead of glorying in separate organization, and separate action, and occasional rivalry and interference with each other, will glory in Christian unity and fraternal love.

But if that day ever arrives, there will be greater difficulties and hindrances surmounted than is found in Church polity.

1st, Denominational pride, bloody mouthed idol! which boasts great things, trumpeting self-laudation and disparagement of others; and probably all have to plead guilty in this respect. This Spirit is as old as the days of the Apostles, when one said, I am of Paul and another I of Apollos. And it has strengthened with its age, so that now it causes the Pauls and Apollos to part entirely asunder. But how inconstant is this spirit, when after all we must confess that none of us have a perfect system, whatever may be said of its excellences, and that we are guilty of error or defect equal in magnitude to that of which we accuse our brethren, or of a nature more heinous in the sight of God. None will deny, that when God shall build up his truly triumphant Catholic Church, it will probably be from materials gathered from all.

Another hindrance to union is, judging each other's systems by their worst features as they are magnified by some extremist, and taking these exaggerated points as samples of the whole system it is at once rejected without a discovery of its excellences. Having touched, perhaps in a stormy day "the shore of our neighbour's possession, and finding there sand, and rock, and foaming breakers, we conclude all is naught and barren, while further up there may be a beautiful region of verdure, and quiet and pleasant abodes."

Another obstacle in the way of union is the judging each society by its most prominent men, we are apt to forget that men most unfaithful to God are apt to be the greatest sectarianists and worldlings. They being devoid of the true spirit of humility easily become ultraists, eccentric denominationalists, who will attract great attention and comment as the leader of his party, and although his procedure may be so disgraceful as to make the truly pious hold down their heads in shame and sorrow, yet, finding countenance among the weak-minded sycophants of his denomination, he is reported to be the leader of the whole and the whole Church is judged by him.

Another elevated barrier in the way of the union of all Methodists, is the *name*.

On the account of the mere name Methodists frequently unblushingly exclude each other from their fellowship. These names Episcopal, Wesleyan, New Connexion, Primitive, and Bible Christian, have embalmed, perpetuated, and stereotyped divisions. And all unauthorized by God's word though made sacred by his people. Now drop these distinctions all off, and retain the term Methodist, and all could come together; add them on again and each denomination becomes like a fortress bristling with weapons which must be defended, and they are so multiplied in Canada that they resemble petty clustering principalities, hindrances to the traveller on the King's highway, where he must shew his passport at every step or be turned back on his journey and become obstacles to growth, consolidation and prosperity.

Again we will find more of the spirit we have been describing among ministers, than among the laity; we blush to acknowledge that the sin of these deplorable divisions must be set to the account of those who are commissioned to preach that Christ prayed, "That they may be one, even as we are one, I in them and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." Too many ministers love to dwell upon controverted points, and shew their skill in demolishing a man of straw they have set up to represent some monstrous evil which they have discovered in some sister Church. And self-seeking has more to do with their course than the love they bear either to Christ or his people.

The people look at all these matters in a more charitable light. They wonder at the sharpness of ministerial disputes: they find members of other denominations enjoying and exhibiting true piety, and regardless of the warnings and expostulations of their respective sectarian preachers, they cannot refrain from fraternizing with them. Let a revival of religion take place in any city, town, or country place, and we will soon have unmis-

takeable evidence that the masses could easily be brought into a loving union if the preachers would let them. The truth is they cannot be kept apart, for when the heart is right division is regarded as the worst of heresy, and every man who loves God loves his brother also. But back-slidden polemics are the last to consent to bring back the King in peace to undivided rule.

With the following from the pen of a presbyter of the Episcopal Church, United States, we will close this chapter.

"The seeming hopelessness of a union is another obstacle in our way, scarcely a Christian can be found but will say we ought to unite, and that it is exceedingly desirable to do so, but the greater part will add, it is hopeless to dream of such a thing. We have no right to speak thus. Is the union desirable? Will God bless the effort to bring it about? Are our divisions sinful? Would Jesus Christ, if He were now to come among us command us all to be one? Would Paul repeat his earnest remonstrances against schisms. What is right? What is the will of God?

These are the questions we are to ask, and if it is clear that God wills us to be one, then if a great deep were before us we are to go forward and attempt to cross it, and it would open; if a mountain were in our way, faith would cast it into the sea or make it become a plain. Better to break the broken limbs again, and set them together aright, especially when we have so great a physician to bless the operation with his oversight and skill, than to hobble on in this crippled way for ever. The attempt has never yet been fairly and fully made. There has never yet been a general congress for peace in the Church. Partial efforts have indeed been put forth, and treaties formed, which were not based upon any real unity, but never have we had a representation from all Protestant Churches convened to seek for some plan of mutual agreement. Shall the sword devour for ever. We want a deeper conviction of the sin and evils of divi-

sions. We must give up laying the flattering unction to our souls, that oneness of spirit is all the unity God demands or that we can attain unto; that our divisions are overruled for good and on the whole necessary. Read all that God's word says on schisms on loving as brethren on divisions and unity, and God's mind will so plainly appear, that we will not dare to palliate the evil. We have days of fasting and prayer for the conversion of the world —we need them far more for conversion to one another. Were our efforts for union to be preceded and attended by days of general humiliation fasting and prayer throughout all the Churches, when we should abase ourselves before God for our dissensions and ask him to forgive, there would be hope. Oh that some men of peace in the various branches of Christ's Church would move upon the people to keep such days until the answer of prayer was given."

CHAPTER VII.

HOW A UNION CAN BE CONSUMMATED.

The conjectures and philosophy of polemics regard a complete union of all the Methodist Societies as impracticable and hopeless, and in the language of one minister it never will take place while the world stands. There is, however, in their theology, more of their own wisdom and inferential reasoning than the word of God. Because they cannot devise any scheme to suit their own minds they despair of its being brought about. But we feel that it is better to have faith in God and his word, than to have faith in their logic. God's word is truth, but man's inferences from circumstances may be very fallacious. True, we may infer the probability of what will be from a knowledge of what is or has been. "The thing" says the wise man, "which has been is the thing which will be." But Jehovah often accomplishes things unknown in the annals of eternity. He has never consulted human wisdom in the arrangement of either natural or moral causes. We know some of the effects of causes. But how do we know them; by reasoning or anticipating how they should be done? No, we have seen the operation, and we may conjecture that the same cause would produce the same effect under another set of like circumstances. And human wisdom can no more deny that the religion of Jesus Christ, which produces a union between a few Methodist classes, will work a universal union, than it can deny that the same force which makes an apple fall holds the universe together.

Our God has transcended the wisdom of man in the constitution of the material universe, and equally so in the constitution of society. Man's depraved prejudices preferences, and impressions, are sure to produce a logic contrary to the scriptures and the will of God. Every cosmogony but that of Moses has proved to be fallacious; man has ever made egregious blunders in describing how things must be done by the Almighty; but when Lord Bacon, who was regarded by his contemporaries as an infernal being, and is now looked back upon as a supernal one, arose to disenthrall the human mind, he shewed that, except in the department of abstract truth, as in mathematics, evidence, not intuition, must be our guide. Human reason, without any testimony from God, is palpable ignorance in regard to how God ought to or did make a universe, or how he should or does govern it. If the human reason is so far short of the truth in relation to material causes, why shall we trust it against the testimony of scripture in the highest departments of truth. The Bible presents a truly Catholic Religion as the greatest blessing heaven can bestow upon our race; Paganismitself, once the common Religion of mankind, justly received the merit of being the great pacificator among the nations of the earth. Christianity, besides the light it sheds upon the present and future destinies of the soul, is designed by God to strengthen the cords that bind man to man in love and peace. Dr. Chalmers, speaking of the doctrines of the Bible, denominated it, a "prophecy of a peace as universal as the spread of the human race, and as enduring as the moon in the firmament, will meet its accomplishment; but it will be brought about by the activity of men. It will be done by the philanthropy of thinking and intelligent Christians. The subject will be brought to the test of Christian principle, and will unite to spread a growing sense of the follies and enormities of war over the countries of the world, and the public will be enlightened by the mild dissemination of gospel sentiment through the land, and the prophecy contained

in this book will pass into effect and accomplishment by no other influence than the influence of its ordinary lessons on the hearts and consciences of individuals; and the measure will first be carried in one country by the control of general opinion, and the sacred fire of good will to the children of men will spread itself through all climes and through all latitudes—and thus by scriptural truth, conveyed with power from one people to another, and taking its ample spread amongst all the tribes and families of the earth, shall we arrive at the magnificent result of peace throughout all its provinces and security in all its dwelling places."

And this Christianity would have done long before this day had not ambitious and wicked men perverted it from its natural tendency. The excellencies of its doctrines, its precepts, and examples has a tendency to make men virtuous, charitable, and peaceful, all are addressed to our hearts to win them to these purposes. But as the religion of Christ was not intended to work upon men by force, but by moral suasion, which sets good and evil before them, so that if they wickedly abuse the power of choice in practising evil, the natural effects of that abuse cannot be avoided. As the detestable results of their ambition and wickedness the head has been substituted for the heart. What men agree to believe seems to these to be of more importance than loving as brethren. This disposition established the laws of heresy in the old Roman Church. It was this that constructed the wrecks and gibbets of the middle ages; it was this that reared the horrible inquisition, and buried alive its thousands in the darkness of that Martyr's Sepulchre—freedom's tomb. It was this that unsheathed the sword of St. Bartholomew, and deluged the fields of France with Christian blood. This lighted the fires of Constance, and Smithfield, and consumed to ashes the bodies of the true saints in the flames of the *auto-da-fe*. This has followed the footsteps of every sincere Reformer; shut against him the temples of the living God; roused the blood-

hounds of human wrath, and has set them on his track; and hunted him through the world as the most ravenous of beasts. Protestantism itself is now whole centuries farther back than it would have been had this wicked, narrow and most hateful of all heresies, never seen the light." How absurd to withdraw from the fellowship of true Christians and send them as incorrigible sceptics loaded with anathemas down to the regions of despair, merely because we disagree on some tenet of little weight. But we expect to recover the true Catholicity of our common faith through the assistance of divine grace. The liberal spirits of this age, men of sound learning, large views, and deep piety, we believe are ready to aid in obliterating the denominational lines which have so long divided the Church. And when we look back to the Reformation of the sixteenth century or to the Wesleyan Reformation and see what the people of God have wrought under the Divine blessing, we should courageously go to work and patiently toil until it be accomplished.

It is now quite natural to ask the questions, if such a union is consummated, by what means will it be effected and who can most effectually promote it? We will answer the last of these questions first. And doubtless many are ready to say that a pious, faithful, and intelligent ministry can most speedily and effectually bring about a union. This is undoubtedly correct; the gospel ministry is a divine institution, and should have the glory of God, and the peace of the Church for its general object. The nature of the duty which it devolves is zealously, affectionately, and constantly to spread a knowledge of the revealed will of God. The first qualification for this high and holy office is a religion of love, free from party spirit and respect of persons, that they may feed the whole flock of God as a good shepherd. Such a religion would lead the ministry to avoid occasions of division, to heal them when they occur, and cultivate a spirit of love and peace, it being good and pleasant for

brethren to dwell together in unity. But it is to be lamented that some ministers have often given way to superstition and wild disorder, and instead of manifesting this amiable spirit of piety, brotherly love, and carefulness to preserve the body in the beauty and order of the gospel, have been the first to produce controversies, rivalries, and divisions, and will be found to be the last to advocate a reconciliation. True they will manifest a willingness to agree, to disagree and force intercourse, hypocritical hollow truces, patched up treaties of peace, Christian alliances, and exchange of pulpits, where there is no real and substantial agreement, where all retain their distinctions, and the evil be not ended but rather increased; but a real and substantial agreement which will end all distinctions that made them the Paul or Apollos of their party they will rigidly oppose.

There is however another class of society to which we look with confidence, this is the membership. The entire superstructure of the Church is based upon it. It is a false fiction that rulers, either in church or state, support their subjects. The reverse is the truth. In a monarchy power does not come from the King and proceed downward. The Emperor, however despotic, derives his authority from his subjects. And it is only because they allow him to be, that he isa tyrant. Kings and rulers only represent in one capacity, the embodied will of the millions; they do but very little in shaping either their own or the destinies of their people. But go to the towns, villages, and hamlets, and learn who edit the periodicals, instruct the youth, harangue the masses, and create the public sentiment of the empire. So in Churches, the Ministers do not bear the members but the reverse. And when the Church becomes corrupt and desperate, the members must produce useful revolutions. "Society" says a certain writer, "is a grand pyramid. The so called lower orders, the toiling millions, are at the bottom, the chief spirit, whether King, prince, or president, or it may be some orator, author, or transcendent scholar, at

the top. Between these are the various intermediate sections into which mankind has been divided; each superior is supported by its next inferior, and all by the broad and powerful base. Now, if this splendid structure, this pyramid of men, gets ruinous, falls down, and requires rebuilding, what is the natural method to be pursued in doing it? Shall we begin with the apex, trusting to that to carry the work of reconstruction downward? Does the apex support or is it only supported? Or if we wish to build one with new materials what is the method? Do we not begin at the bottom? What architect what philosopher—rather, what child, would give us any other answer? And this is not a law of art, but of necessity, of nature. No superior portion can have support, consequently existence, till all below it is properly built up. All motion, all labour, all improvement, is from lower to the higher." Hence we find, turning to whatever point we may, that society is shaped, directed, and supplied by the common people. When they speak ministers and princes must obey. It is because they give the consent of silence that these divisions exist, sound reasoning, therefore, designates the membership, as the class who can restore the peace of the Church. All they have to do is to say, we will no longer maintain divisions therefore let there be peace or we will stop the supplies, and there will be peace. There are few ministers who are sufficiently audacious as to advocate and perpetuate sectarianism in the face of a decidedly peaceable people. Again the membership will more readily give up these points of difference, though highly valued, which are not conscientiously held as of Divine obligation than the ministry. They are not so accustomed to teach without opposition, and can bear contradiction more easily than those ministers can who have so long shewed their skill in controversy. And further they have no official honours to guard or pecuniary advantages to protect. It will therefore be comparatively more easy to bring the membership to take measures for a union, than many of the clergy.

We come now to notice the measures to be taken to accomplish the design. Past efforts have been in a great degree failures, because they were partial, reaching only to a courteous recognition of each other, an occasional meeting on some common platform, but this did not come up to the gospel requirement, it did not reach the root of the evil or draw down the blessing of God. He could not be deceived; and he saw no real reconciliation in his family; but a standing right where they were. But it is necessary for Christians to form such a combination that there will be no rival standard in the field, an alliance offensive and defensive against a common enemy and every minister the minister of the whole body, supported as freely by one as another. Then there will be no particular object for ministers to retain their distinctions. In order to form such an alliance it is necessary to remember that whoever, with the heart, believes unto righteousness, is that moment fully and completely constituted a child of God, through the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit; and at the same moment he is fully and completely incorporated into the Body of Christ, the Church of the living God. Hence all true Christians, are one with one another, members of the same body, irrespective of minor opinions. We cannot expect while men's minds preserve their individuality and liberty, that they should think alike upon all points, and it is neither necessary or desirable. Having one Lord—Jesus Christ; one faith—belief in his atoning merits; one baptism—that of the Holy Spirit, Christians should exercise charity and forbearance in relation to mere opinions. An alliance of some kind is absolutely necessary for mutual recognition and assistance of the friends of such union. There has never been any great work done by community without organization. All efforts must prove like a rope of sand without it. What would the Temperance Society have accomplished had the friends of temperance never organized. All human transactions between man and man require some mutual recognition

and confirmation, and would be foundationless without it. Hence, if ever a union between the various Methodist Societies is effected, it is very important that the friends of such union unite together by some common bond of brotherhood, which will prevent further division and at the same time contribute to heal those now in existence.

But who will invent the scheme or lay the platform on which all Methodists can cordially unite. The discoverer of a plan that will be adopted by all, will merit greater honour than Columbus, who discovered a new world. But probably, as in all great inventions, progressive steps and hints from various quarters, will work out the difficult problem. Thus does God humble the greedy ambition of man by making great discoveries, the providential leadings of many minds, and lucky accidents rather than the wisdom of individuals. Being a firm believer in the above sentiment the writer more readily presents the following plan for the accomplishment of the great design. And although he flatters himself with the conviction that it will be a commencement, yet he does not elevate it to the standard of perfection or of all that may be necessary; but rather "as the drift wood from a distant, happy land, pointing some thoughtful observer, as he looks wistfully over the dark waters of strife, to the existence of such a world, once known, perhaps, in old traditions, long lost sight of, but destined to be reached, and prompting him to seek a pathway to its shores."

Let companies be formed in every neighbourhood, who will unite together weekly in earnest fervent prayer to Almighty God to hasten the peace of the Church; also let there be county and provincial conventions held under the following or some other regulations, viz.: Inasmuch as the Methodist Church in Canada, which should be one, is now divided into various incorporations, without any important differences, either doctrinal or practical, and a union into one body is indispensably essential to the interest of the cause of God, and inasmuch as a solemn

conviction of duty urges to united action, we, whose names are hereunto annexed form ourselves into a league, known as the Canadian Methodist Alliance, adopting the following as the present Articles of our constitution and agreement.

1st. That all converted or regenerated men and women who will subscribe to these articles of union, or such other articles as may be legally hereafter provided, shall form this Methodist alliance.

2nd. That this alliance shall be divided into companies as their places of residence shall dictate. One of each company shall be elected by the company as delegate to a county convention, whose duty it shall be to call his company together weekly for mutual earnest prayer to Almighty God for his blessing on their efforts for the peace of the Church.

3rd. That there shall be quarterly conventions held in each county composed of the delegates elected by the several companies and all the Methodist Ministers stationed in the County who may please to attend.

4th. There shall be a semi-annual provincial convention held, to be composed of one delegate from each county, and forty ministers of the Wesleyan Conference, and twenty ministers of the Episcopal Conference, ten ministers of the Methodist New Connexion Conference, ten ministers of the Primitive Conference, and five of the Bible Christian Conference, if such ministers please to attend, they being appointed by their respective Conferences or otherwise.

5th. That the object of this alliance in all its meetings and conventions shall be: 1st, To produce increase and preserve brotherly love and friendly intercourse between the various Methodist denominations; 2nd, To promote by united exertion a complete union of all the various Methodist Societies into one body, and to discountenance schisms in community; 3rd, To instruct the youth in the evils of Church divisions.

6th. In order to carry out more fully the third particu-

lar of our object, the alliance pledges itself to countenance and support Union Sabbath Schools, as far as possible.

7th. That the objects of this Alliance, as set forth in this constitution, being fundamental principles of this league, the power of altering the constitution in this respect is hereby renounced. But in other respects any changes in the constitution may be made by any of the semi-annual conventions.

We advocate mutual prayer for Methodist union, for many reasons. A few only will our limits allow us to notice. First, it will make Christians honest in their pretensions to peace. Church divisions, if fairly considered, have in no ages arisen so much from want of light as a want of disposition, to follow the light which God has imparted. The law of love written in the hearts of the truly converted, is clear and expressive enough to properly direct Christians to be one, and avoid schism; did they not suffer their passions more forcibly to direct them otherwise. But when they come to hold communion with that God who has commanded them to supplicate blessings upon their enemies and taught them to pray to be forgiven as they forgive, they become honest in their desires for peace with their fellow men. When we are exercised in prayer for fellow Christians, our affections and sympathies become very tender towards them and we not only pant for a closer union with them on earth but also a reunion with them in heaven. Assuredly an exercise which cements the affections, assuages the passions, purifies the motives and imparts a sanctity to our efforts is worthy of the interest attached to it by the Apostle, who "exhorts therefore that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, that they may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

Again, Christians should be like their Lord in manners, dispositions, and mind; and when we look at the example of meekness he set, who had every opportunity to es-

tablish a worldly character of superior greatness and power, being free from all ambition for vain glory, he declined worldly praise and honours which occasions invited him to, and in the only instances of public honours he permitted, that the scriptures might be fulfilled, in the Hosannahs of the multitude as their King entered Jerusalem, he manifested humility, meekly receiving those honours sitting upon an ass.

In his humble choice of family and friends and his conduct among them, rather as a servant than a master, even washing the feet of his disciples, he learns his people to be meek and lowly of heart, for he was meek and lowly. And further, that life in which he manifested constant humility was ended by his humbly submitting himself to the death of the cross, the death of a malefactor—dragged to Calvary without opposition or complaint, "as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before his shearers, he opened not his mouth," from which we learn to lay down our lives for our brethren, rather than to separate from them. The will of Jesus Christ in relation to the oneness of his people is plainly expressed in hrs prayer, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." Now it is the experience of every Christian that nothing more cultivates a meek and humble spirit, and keeps down pride, than fervent, effectual, and energized prayer considered only in its philosophical influence on ourselves. And farther sympathy with Christ, in his prayer that his people may be one, nowhere gains on the heart as in earnest pleading and supplication for its final accomplishment.

We are in favour of conventions; first, because they would be composed of the truly liberal of all denominations who are actuated by a spirit of universal and impartial benevolence, and who by association would become mutually attached to each other. Hence it would become more easy for them to make those sacrifices of feeling so necessary to be made if all come together; secondly, being designed for the union of all they would become the great centre of Catholic feeling.

The more our acquaintance extends with men of this character the less our prejudices become; in proportion as we associate with our fellow Christians, our hearts enlarge, our obligations increase towards them, and we learn to respect their opinions; secondly, conventions for the purposes specified would afford an opportunity for a mutual exchange of thought and feeling, which would produce unanimity, harmony, and mutual confidence, free from that satire and raillery so common in theological discussions, by which sectarianism is developed and made strong; thirdly, an incomparable influence would be exerted by an association of men of strong sense, deep piety, and Catholic spirit, against that brainless, heartless monster, sectarianism, which is begotten of ignorance and pride.

Again, we are in favour of Sabbath-schools, because it is on the rising generation that the Church depends for its future glory and stability; and it becomes our duty to carefully instruct the young in the relation they hold to Christ and His people and its consequent duties and obligations. God made it the imperious duty of the Israelites to instruct their children into the nature and design of the obligations of their institutions as a peculiar people. "Thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children, and talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

We advocate union schools because the adopting a denominational name would either exclude many from

the school or awaken among parents of different faith, suspicion of proselytism. It is natural to suppose that the teacher of a denominational school would draw his scholars with him to his own Church. Then will come rumours, evil surmisings, back-bitings, whisperings, tumults, and perverse disputings, to the injury of the school and Church. But let a union school be established, in which the cardinal doctrines of the Bible are taught, and in these all agree, and sectarianism there must die. It cannot live in the light of the gospel, which proclaims a law of love. A union school is organized for the benefit of all who choose to avail themselves of it, and without requiring a conformity to anything more than is reasonable for its proper government; it seeks the welfare of all and awakens in the minds of the children no prejudices against the religion of their parents; it discountenances proselytism, sectarianism, and bigotry, and establishes that Catholicity which will not limit its usefulness to the narrow bounds of any one Church, but gives an invitation that all denominations can accept with confidence, and secures to the school a permenancy which no denominational name can give. And here let it be observed, that where children associate together from Sabbath to Sabbath under the pure example of liberality, and fervent, earnest prayer for the peace of the Church, and daily study the life of Jesus, whose spirit and conduct, whose parables and prayers, and death of agony all speak through and through universal and impartial love, it is impossible for them to become theoretically or practically sectarianists, and retain their own self-respect.

To elevate and exhibit all the good that can be produced and cherished favourable to union in the Sabbath school would require a more comprehensive m in than I possess.

Then let us go to work like Christians, in one of the most surprisingly great and grand enterprises which ever filled mortal hands. And the blessings we will confer

on our race and the Church will perhaps never be known until the books that contain the records of the worlds history are read in the light of the judgment fires, while earth, heaven and hell listen.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOTIVES TO UNION.

We proceed now to present a few motives to union, for the special consideration of Christians; but few others we presume, will be sufficiently interested to give this subject attention. Others may read this work and carelessly throw it aside, with a passing remark, either in favour or against our object, but will not deeply feel its importance. The true Christian however, will pungently feel the importance of Methodist union; the more pungently in proportion as he feels interested in the advancement of the Redeemer's Kingdom on earth.

Various are the topics which this subject suggests. Motives which should influence the various Methodist denominations to be one, we find on every hand. What is unholy society on earth but a fearful development of the mournful degeneracy of our race; breaking forth in envy, distrust, personal and social rivalries, tyranny, wars and bloodshed? What are the scriptures but a continual sermon against strife, discord, schism, and divisions? What should the Church be but an exhibition of peace, harmony, and unity among brethren, resulting from faith in a common Father? What will the judgment be but an awful disclosure of the evils of discord? What will hell be but the fearful abodes of the contentious? What will heaven be but the constant home of peace and harmony? In short, the voices which come from within and without, from above and beneath, from time and eternity, from heaven and hell, admonish brethren to live together in unity.

In further consideration of this subject it is proper for us to drop these general remarks and bring to the notice of the reader some particular motives of practical importance.

1st, The sinfulness of the causes of these divisions is an argument in favour of healing them.

There are now in the world two kinds of Christianity, the one dogmatical, the other evangelical.

Gospel Christianity is the reception of the life of God in the soul by the "renewing of the Holy Ghost: which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour." And the believer who is "filled with the Spirit" becomes God-like, having a transfusion of the mind of Christ into his mind, from which spring love, joy, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and that charity which covers a multitude of faults. Dr. Cummings represents the christian as acting "the part of the painter who was called on to paint Alexander the Great. Alexander had a scar upon his forehead which he had received in the course of his Macedonian battles, and the painter was perplexed to find a way by which to escape shewing this deformity. At last he hit upon the happy expedient of representing the Monarch, sitting in his chair, his head leaning upon his right arm, and the forefinger covering the scar upon his brow."

Dogmatical Christianity has its origin in the very worst passions of men. Because some carnal ministers, instead of being the humble agents, under God, in the conversion of sinners, prostrated their energies to advance the selfish interests of scheming politicians; or because some worldly ministers, who sought their own honour or gain, failed in the accomplishment of their designs while connected with the Church, for the purpose of success in their darling schemes, separated from the Church and framed new dogmas, true ministers of God's word have allowed themselves to be divided. The tendency to division and strife in the Corinthian Churches, proceeded according to the Bible, from carnality. So the

present existing divisions and strife proceed from carnality. And inasmuch as to be carnally minded is death, our divisions will be attended with death and ruin, unless we, under the influence of the spirit, become so spiritually-minded as to live in love and peace. Then, in view of the sinful causes of our divisions, let us yield an obedience to the will of God, live in peace on earth that we may not be filled with sorrow and vain regrets through eternity.

2nd, We urge as a motive, the value of union to society. No truly Christianized mind can read the history of either churches or nations, but must mourn the absence of that bond of brotherhood which should bind man to man. Man as a selfish being is antagonistical to God and his neighbour; seeking his own and not the things which are Christ's or his neighbours. The Rev. Tobias Spicer remarks: "Sin has entered into our world, and death by sin. Every man has turned his hand against his brother. This world is a slaughter-house, literally an Aceldama, a field of blood. And why is this? Because men have forgotten that God is their Father, and that they are all brethren. If all would strive 'to dwell together in unity,' the state of society would be wonderfully changed: tyranny and oppression would entirely cease, and the oppressed would go free, murders, robberies, and thefts would be known no more, and men would enjoy their lives and property without molestation; dishonesty and fraud of every kind would cease through all the wide family of man. Then would prisons and houses of correction, with which our world abounds, be needed no more; instruments of warfare would be converted into implements of agriculture and husbandry, and the ancient prophecy would be fulfilled,—'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord.' Oh, blessed state of society, how much to be desired! when will it be realized in all its

glory?—When all men shall be regulated by the pure precepts of the gospel! Then shall brethren dwell together in unity."

One of the principles in the organization of civil or religious society is a spirit of independance which establishes personal interests, consequently there are frequent collisions. Nations, blinded by passion, dashing against nations, man against man, and sect against sect; producing a series of sorrows and crimes arising out of national ambition, personal interest, and priestly pride. But Christianity in the fulfilment of its benevolent purposes will put an end to this state of things. And its work on earth is not finally accomplished as long as strife exists. "The most prominent feature," says the above quoted author, "of the Christian religion is love, universal love to God and man. When the Apostle had enumerated several Christian graces, he introduces charity, which is but another name for love, and although these Christian graces were excellencies not to be found in any other religion under the sun; yet he says, 'The greatest of these is charity' for 'charity never faileth.' In the early ages of Christianity, Christians were remarkable for 'dwelling together in unity,' insomuch that their enemies were constrained to say, 'See how these Christians love.'"

Church institutions, which are closely connected with the fulfilment of the purposes of the religion of Christ, should have for their everlasting basis universal benevolence, which would cause a cessation of personal and social rivalries. And when persons and societies be at peace, nations would be at peace also. The same Divine law which secures the one, would bring about the other. When social strife ceases, the occasion for national strife no longer exists, for the God of individuals, and social institutions, and Church unions, is the God of nations. We attach value to wealth, learning, good name, happiness. It is well. These are all desirable; but how less than dust in the ballance are they compared with

love and peace. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox, and hatred therewith. It is these which spread joy all over the celestial regions, and awakens the song of heaven. If this be so, we are correct when we say, that the value of union to society should be a powerful motive to influence us to labour to bring it about.

3rd, The honour of God requires it.

If we analyze this subject closely, we will find, that when there is a union of man with God, there is a union with all who are united to God, God in all, and all in God; the Father in Christ, and Christ in those who are begotten of him; mutually bound together and living in each other; no more separated in fact, or capable of being separated from each other, than the rays of the light are separated, or capable of being separated from the natural sun. God created man at the first, in his own image, and although man lost that image, yet, through the mediatorial agency of Christ that image can be restored. The Saviour in speaking of himself, remarks: "I and my Father are one," and praying for his people, says: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." And St. Paul, speaking of the religion of Jesus, describes it as being, Christ in us the hope of glory. Hence we see that the religion of Christ reproduces the divine image in the human soul; and the Christians life should be as God's life in humanity. God, therefore, is honoured by the peaceable life of his people; and to promote his honour should beour highest ambition. God is jealous of his honour. When the Israelites sinned in the wilderness, he said, 'I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them cease from among men, were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely I wrought for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted before the heathen." God was so jealous of his honour that he would

bear with the insult of that people rather than the heathen should say, "The Lord is not able to carry his people through." How carefully then should Christians be in their conduct toward each other, when his honour is at stake. When Christians live in peace and are united, they give to the world unmistakeable evidence of the Divinity of their religion. "By this" says Jesus, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another, and by this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." When Christians, who should set forth delightful views of the Divine perfections, indulge in hatred, variance, wrath, and strife, they commit a fraud on the universe, and become living libels on the moral character of God. We argue, therefore, that the honour of God demands a union.

4th, The interest of the cause of Christ requires.

"What is the chief end of man?" enquires a certain catechism, and answers, "to glorify God and enjoy him for ever. But how can we glorify God without entire conformity to his will; and while Christians are divided the Saviour's prayer has not been fulfilled. There is still something more necessary; and that defect not only dishonours God, but prevents us, who are styled the lights of the world, bringing our fellows to Christ. The world in this day has too sharp an eye to be deceived; they will take knowledge of us and then draw their conclusions. They understand that "the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy; and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace; and it is no marvel that when they find among us division and strife, that they conclude that we are devoid of the spirit of Christ, and "earthly, sensual, devilish, for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work, Jas. iii., 16, 17. And when we come to look at the circumstances which surround us, and the opportunities we

are favoured with to draw many after us, to brighten our crown of rejoicing for ever; we say, let there be peace. They that are wise, shall shine as the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness for ever and ever. We in our divided state may do something; but infinitely greater will be our efficiency if we are united as a mighty phalanx against the common enemy. But we come more closely to look at our advantages and opportunities of doing good; and we believe that since the creation there were never more favourable circumstances offered to any people than is this moment presented to the Canadian Methodist.

A great harvest is ripe, waving with world-wide expanse, demanding sturdy reapers, men who will abandon self, and with quenchless love make universal effort for the salvation of men. With propriety we can adopt the language of a certain writer of the United States, and say, God is sending the old world by millions to our shores. In one of our valleys alone we could victual the whole population of the earth, and God only knows how soon we shall have to do it; hither come the rich to invest capital; the poor to seek bread; the wise to impart knowledge; the silly, they scarce know why; the timid, to escape revolution: the bold, to seek adventures. Whence do they come? From all the earth, but chiefly from the dominions of Romanism. Welcome, thrice welcome; they come to seek refuge—may they find salvation! But that they may, we must bestir ourselves; we must send ministers by thousands through the valleys of the West; we must station them by hundreds on the mountain tops, in the wilderness, and along the shores of the Pacific. This we owe to ourselves, to Jesus Christ, to perishing souls.

Egypt, Persia, Turkey, and the Islands of the sea, are taking their stand among civilized nations, are offering inviting fields of Christian labour. India is whitening to the harvest of salvation. China has relaxed her unsocial exclusiveness, and opened her paths to the foot-

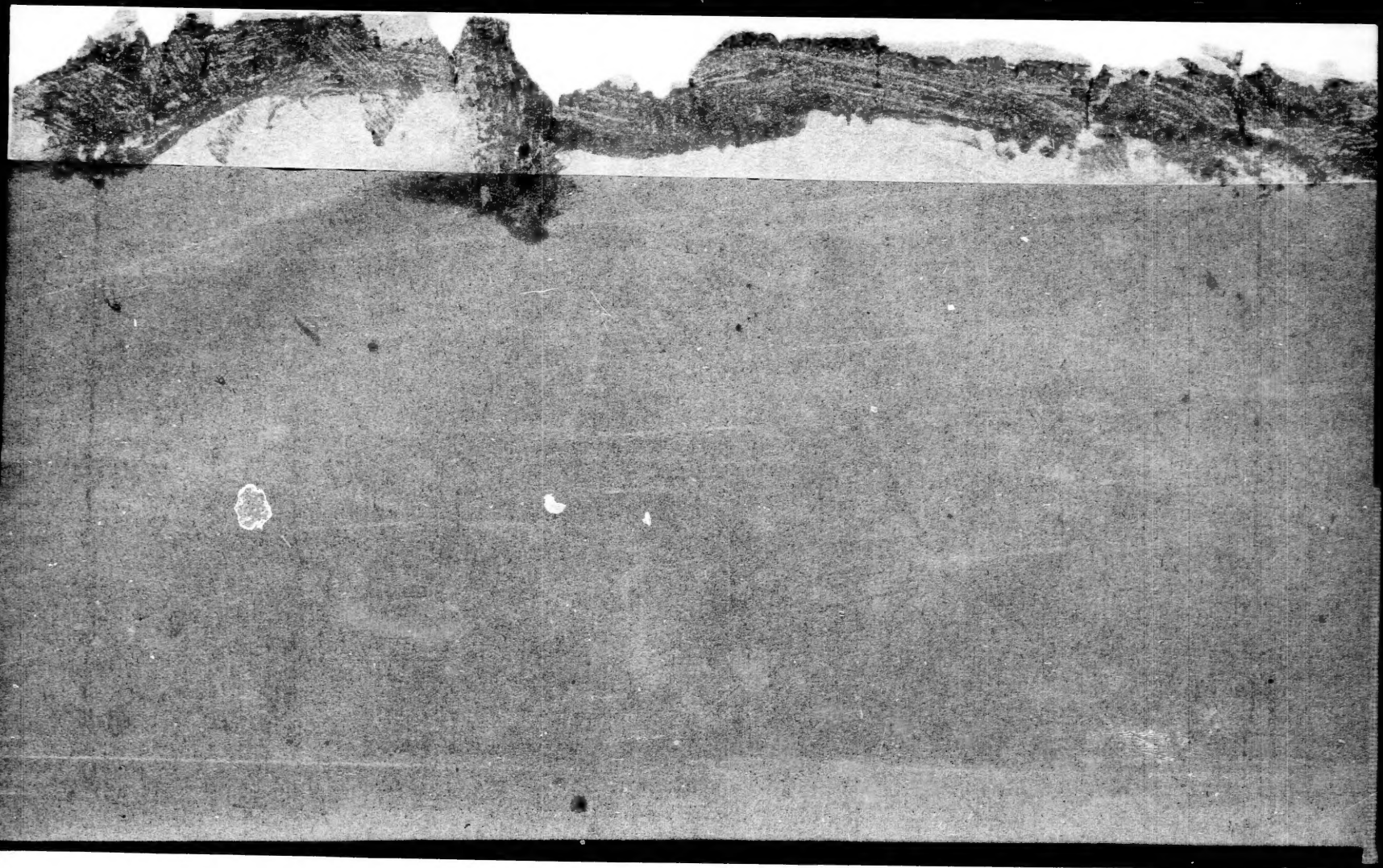
step of the evangelist. Africa, so long known only to geography, is accessible at both her extremities and along the eastern and western borders. The mountains of Asia, the valleys of the Nile, the Niger, the Senegal, and the Gambia, the snowy peaks of Greenland, and the volcanic summits of intertropical regions cry out to us for help. Ten thousand missionaries would not satisfy the demand of the present hour. What shall we do? "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest." And while we pray let us act consistent with our prayer, and not waste our energies and neutralize our efforts, by labouring to establish conflicting interests. Better be ciphers in the world than to strike the friends of God. Oh, that we could see and feel the mighty work which is to be done and done at once, before the opportunity rushes past, and make that combined effort which becomes the sons and daughters of the Most High.

5th. Not only does the honour of God and the interest of his cause demand a union; but in the Bible his authority commands it. And when God speaks let heaven and earth stand in awe. He has established harmony in the kingdom of nature, and equally so in the dispensations of his grace in the salvation of men; and therefore he commands his people to be one; and who ever resisted his commands and prospered. And now dear reader look again through this work and review all the quotations from the Bible against divisions and in favour of union, and do not hastily throw them aside; or go to the Bible for yourself, and do not treat it with contempt, but feel that it is God speaking to you, and when he commands his people to be one, will you refuse? Settle that question with the eye of God full upon your soul, and see that you refuse not him that speaketh from heaven; and when he says, "Let brotherly love continue" and, "Let there he no divisions among you," will you stick for sectarian peculiarities, and dogmatically draw denominational lines between those who reflect your Father's

image, who possesses a family likeness; rather by your influence and prayers, drive away the demon of discord which has so long crippled our efforts, and let us unitedly hasten the answer of the Redeemer's dying prayer, that a brighter day may dawn on the Christian Church.

6th. We urge as a motive to Methodist Union, that life will soon be over, and then bigotry and sectarian jealousy will be at an end, and all Christians will dwell together in perfect harmony in the Kingdom of heaven. And when we weigh our dogmas, which are the subjects of our warmest contentions, in the ballances of eternity, how trifling they appear; and everything beneath the sun is transient, like shadows they vanish, "the fading glories disappear, the short-lived beauties die away. But from these fleeting scenes we will awake to things more real and substantial. And we are on the very confines of Eternity; soon we shall be its incumbents. There is but a step between us and death, "From whose bourne no traveller returns." But what is beyond? Would you live without union with your brethren here; you cannot there. There all Christians in the presence of Christ and the holy angels, unite in a great multitude which no man can number; gathered from the East and West; from the North and South; and dwell in unity before the throne, and brightening under the smile of God, mutually join in the triumphant song of "salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever." If so, what an impressive motive to union. Why shall we be divided on earth when we hope to be united in heaven. These motives might be enlarged with profit, so as to increase their weight, and many others not inferior in force might be added; but we leave the subject for reflection, and expect to see some good result in the coming judgment. And in dismissing this subject with our eyes on the judgment, and all the realities of eternity standing out in bold relief before us, we feel inexpressible solicitude. We look into the future and ask what will be the result of our toil. What effect it

will produce upon our race we know not; but this we do know, that soon the writer and his readers will meet in eternity. The hand that penned these lines will be cold and motionless in the grave; and your eyes that now read them will be sealed in death; and we will agree then on the necessity of Christian union on earth.



PROSPECTUS

OF

The Methodist Union.

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THE METHODIST UNION will be published in Canada West, in monthly numbers of sixteen pages each, at the low price of *Two Shillings and Sixpence a Year*. The object of this Periodical is to promote a Union of all the Methodist Denominations in Canada upon equitable and Christian principles.

This work will recognize no particular tenets as being the basis of union, but will give prominence to the excellencies of the various Societies, leaving others, whose tastes prepare them for such a work, to expose their defects.

Being fully persuaded that the multitude of corporations into which the Methodist Church is divided is contrary to the revealed will of God, antagonistical to the conversion of the world, and a sinful waste of Our Lord's money, the Editor will devote much space to the development of the great principles of Christian charity and frugality, hoping thereby to move all, who love God supremely and their brethren affectionately, to rise superior to party spirit and sectarian feeling, and cordially unite in the advancement of the common cause of our redeemer.

The Editor humbly solicits contributions for the *Union* from the wise and good of all denominations; at the same time he pledges himself not to admit anything into its columns which is not calculated to heal the unfortunate divisions which have so long estranged the children of God, but will endeavour, by Divine help, to present evidences, and answer objections, in a manner becoming the great subject he discusses, and so approve himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

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